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# EROTHANATOS

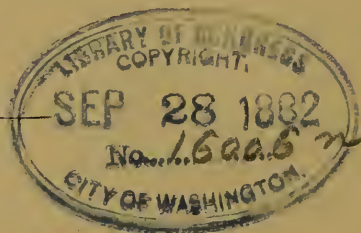
AND

## SONNETS

BY ✓

LEONARD WHEELER.

11



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TO

M. E. B.



## PREFACE.

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THE poem, Erothanatos, is to be understood as illustrating an interesting epoch in the life of an imaginary youth, one of natural piety, and devoted to the worship of the beautiful. He is a youth of solemn and thoughtful moods, of serious poetic aspirations, and keenly sensitive alike to the raptures of joy or woe. He yearns for the divine companionship of human wisdom, honor and truth ; but he meets no such spirits, and, believing virtue to be banished from the hearts of men, he moodily shuns their haunts. He walks the solitary twilight paths of the melancholy student, imbibing dangerously of the ancient vitiated wells of sophistry. In the ego-

tism of intellectual enthusiasm he withholds scornfully from all human intercourse ; and delighting in the auroral ages of literature, and exalting the pagan philosophies to the empire of his reason, he darkly shuns the light of day. But in this studious isolation among the relics and traditions of antiquity, his companionless heart grows restless, and he enjoys no religious peace of mind. There still remains a void in his existence that must be filled ; there must still sound a key-note to harmonize the jarring chords of his life. He seeks solace "in the presence of the great company of the stars and the flaming constellations," and muses lonely through midnight solitudes in vain. But, in an hour of desperate thought, the knowledge that human love must fill the void, and a human voice strike that key-note, "on his vacant mind flashes like strong inspiration." His mind conceives a beautiful ideal of womanhood to wed his friendless soul. He again seeks among women the embodiment of his vision,



but vainly, until he meets a child whose beauty and disposition promise the realization of his poetic imagining. Enraptured, he beholds the development of her superb faculties and beauty. Self-absorbed, he blindly worships the idol; when alas! his flowering hopes are blighted in the bud. Death rends the delicate fabric of his love-consecrated dream, and the grave engulfs the object of his adoration. Thus desolated, he abandons himself to miserable grief and the fearful passion of hopeless sorrow. The poem intends to picture his feelings and thoughts from this stage of despair, through the contemplative changes of introspective analysis, through the chaos of scepticism, to the celestial hope and unalienable faith in the after life of divine love beyond the grave.

With the trembling acknowledgment of many faults, I offer this first literary venture to the notice of the public, with the prayer for only justice tempered with the gentlest quality of mercy. In conclu-

sion, I wish to express my sincere thanks to my dear friends, James B., S. Arthur, and Edward H. Nies, N. Lattard, William Pfeiffer, and John G. Willson, for their united friendly interest and generous encouragement. I also wish to express my indebtedness to Mr. R. H. Stoddard for his disinterested concern in the writer's behalf. The author subscribes himself gratefully, their obliged servant,

LEONARD WHEELER.

NEW YORK CITY, July, 1882.

EROTHANATOS.





# EROTHANATOS.

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## PROEM.

THERE grew up in the night  
A peerless lily white—  
The golden morning star shone on its birth ;  
And, heavenly light arrayed in,  
A silent, wild-eyed maiden  
Sprang from the star, and kissed the flower on earth.

The pale, sweet bud she pressed  
Close to her paler breast ;  
Her cold lips moved in prayerful whisperings ;  
But, in the morning gray,  
Her spirit passed away  
In the rustling music of receding wings.

Love cometh and is gone,  
A star of early dawn,  
Ablaze with ardent day's unrisen fires ;  
Love cometh up abloom  
In light that is her doom,  
And dieth as the morning star expires.

O Star, why dost thou leave us ?  
O Love, how canst thou grieve us ?  
Bright Star, and brighter Love, faint not at morn ;  
But, Star, outshine the moon !  
And face day's fiery noon,  
And, Love, live for a day as thou art born !

The sun comes forth in splendor ;  
The star, so bright and tender,  
Must perish in the heated morning's breath ;  
And earth's wan frost so chill is,  
That Love's delightful lilies  
Are withered on the freezing lips of Death.

Bring pansies, and bring roses,  
And rosemary, and posies

Of pinks, and blue-bells from the blooming heather ;  
And in the morning chilly,  
Come, bury Love's dead lily  
Where the star died, so they both may lie together.

And, through the cool green grasses,  
Will every wind that passes  
Chant low and sweet for Love, the bright day long ;  
And under the blue skies,  
With wild and streaming eyes,  
Pale maidens shall lament in cheerless song ;

And from the earth all over  
Shall come full many a lover,  
His eyes astare with pain that cannot sleep ;  
And lips hard set and scornful  
Shall utter, soft and mournful,  
Complaints, and alien eyes shall melt and weep.

For Love, sweet Love, is dead !  
With lowly lying head

Deep in the grass, her virgin lily fading ;  
The light passed from her eyes  
With a star that left the skies,  
And shines again for no sad voice upbraiding.

Farewell, Love, birth of Aidenn !  
A Lily, Star, or Maiden,  
Bloom not, nor shine, nor sing through life's long  
years,  
As thy dim spirit waits  
Within Death's icy gates,  
To dissolve them with thy kisses, all in tears.

Then our immortal eyes  
Shall ope on Paradise,  
And Death shall harm no more on land or sea,  
And all the dead shall rise,  
With re-awakened eyes,  
And see earth changed to heav'n, and all through  
thee.

Farewell, Love, now we miss thee !  
Farewell, Love, till we kiss thee,



When thou hast Death consumed, whose heart so  
chill is ;

Farewell, Love, till we meet thee

Amid thy stars, to greet thee

And crown thee with thy resurrected lilies !

## DEDICATION.

FOR her remembrance, and to you who loved,  
Who still hold dear a dead one, cherishing  
A memory deathless as the soul, who cling  
To thoughts of her as grasses hold to earth,  
Their lives depending on the clasp they give ;  
To you who miss a beauty in the sun  
Because it throws one shadow less, and one  
Blue eye it brightens not : for you I frame  
These mournful lays. For you who pensive steal  
Away at dusk to meditate and mourn  
In some lone spot for one who nevermore  
Walks hand in hand with you, and cheers no more :  
For you I sing, and to assuage my heart  
Of grief, I chant this melancholy Hymn.

For you whose altar-fires are built on graves,  
Who kneel above the dead with weeping eyes,  
Whose hearts beat out your immemorial lives

In music consecrated to the dead,  
Whose thought religious, and whose pious care  
Is one mound ev'ry season visited,  
And made a paradise of thoughtful flowers :  
For you this song, this dirge for one I loved.

O Memory ! still preserve her lineaments,  
The grace of motion, and the lovelier  
Expression of her smiling face that beamed  
As sunshine in the leafy days of June.  
O month of joy and beauty, solace me !  
Thy youthful flowers bring rarest gifts to me :  
Remembrance in thy violets of her eyes,  
Remembrance in thy roses of her lips—  
The sweet child-mouth, rare as a singing flower  
That shed a fragrance, opening musical  
At dawn and closed at twilight with a song.  
O Nature ! pregnant with suggestions sweet  
Of her, adorn my thoughts ; make fair my songs  
With gentle scenes, remembered beautiful,  
Of thine in passé days, when, on thy slopes,  
And through thy woody dells, with summer blooms  
Of wild flow'rs decked and pied, I roved the child,

And had deep joy in thee that pleases now  
The man of sorrow, grown up from the child,  
But with his child-heart still ! Oh ! tune my verse  
With childhood's poesie—the artless art  
Unstudied, and best recompensed with tears—  
That warbling flows, as when a wild bird sings,  
Or sad, or glad, as the poor heart may be  
That beats within, the pulse of joy or pain !

O Nature ! aid, adorn, inspire the song  
With opening buds and birds, with shine and shower  
Through hill and dale, and ever let the breeze  
Blow freshly through and odorous ; not harsh  
As from the wracking seas, but soft as breath  
Blown by Arcadian shepherds in their flutes,  
And sad ; for this is still a song of Death.  
The flowers and birds depart as seasons change,  
The cheerful sun gives place to storm and rain,  
How cheerless ! when the wintry wind loud roars  
That bends the oak and beats the sapling down ;  
And so, O heart ! love's summer fled from thee,  
Its birds' and brooks' and breezes' harmonies,  
And flowers and sunlight fled from thee, with Her,

Nipped in the day when Love was young and fair  
Thy life is one long sigh, one Autumn day  
Unchanging in the heart, one sad, sad day  
Of rain and moaning wind and rotting leaves ;  
Decay despoils the hills, the woods, the plains,  
And fields are humid with the smell of death.

O Soul, what pleasure is in living now ?  
Thy Spring and Summer passed thee by, thy Youth  
And Love evanished when the birds flew South,  
But not with them return thy Love and Youth :  
Lost Love and Youth return, alas, no more !  
When snow-drops, open-eyed, hear bluebirds sing,  
Thy Love will waken not, nor sing to thee,  
Nor hear thy footstep in the new-grown grass :  
When Summer laughs and blushes in the fields,  
Thy Love will neither laugh, nor blush for thee ;  
The lilies on her grave will bend and weep,  
And thou wilt sound thy sorrows to the winds ;  
Thy Love knows not thy voice in woe or weal ;  
She thrills not in her winding-sheet for thee,  
Nor bursts again, like Spring, with flowers and  
song,



Through thy long years of sad autumnal days—  
Lost Love and Youth return, alas, no more !

To you I sing, dear mother of my loved,  
And I bewail with you whose silent tears  
Fall blighting on your cheeks, where Sorrow's  
hand

Has set the ghostly roses of Despair,  
That pale and paler fade with spectral grief,  
As thought reverts to her—so lost ! so lost !  
Oh, the long hours ! the joyless eves and morns !  
Alas, the heavy heart that will not break !  
And oh ! the storms that shake this reed of life,  
And hurricanes that smite, and yet nor rend !  
I see you walk the lonely house, so still ;  
I know you pause and listen for a step  
That will not sound forever on its floors ;  
I bow with you and weep ; I hear you sob  
When some frail relic of her careless hands,  
Lost in a darkened corner, comes to light ;  
I see you press it to your lips and heart,  
And hear her soft name tremble in your voice,  
As sad and dear as her remembered love.

To you, this elegy of mournful thoughts,  
Drawn from my contemplation of her death,  
Who loved her stronger than my weakness knew,  
And deeper than I shall love evermore,  
I dedicate, with sighs and many tears,  
These songs of tribulation, these low sighs  
Of weeping hopes within me, these desires  
That flicker through my spirit's night, to be  
A bright eternal star of righteousness,  
Fixed blazing in the orbéd deeps of love.

To you I dedicate this solemn song,  
Attempt ambitious, with a beam of hope  
To pierce the dark abysms of thought, to guide  
Its dim ghosts o'er the towering crags of Doubt  
Unto the land where Peace and Love abide,  
Of flowers and streams, and sun and stars; to lead  
From haunted valleys of Despair and Pain,  
And dismal dens where Death lives horrible,  
Those spirits to the light and life of Hope,  
So that with looking up they may aspire,  
Aspiring, reach that pinnacle of Faith  
Where inspiration gives the finer sight

And sensibility that doth perceive  
In poiséd firmaments the power of God—  
Whose Intellect creates, sustains, absorbs—  
And feel the throbbing movement of His Life,  
The grand pulsating Heart of universe,  
Well-spring of souls and immortalities.—  
Celestial Origin ! in Thee we live  
And rise sublime, eternally to soar  
And shine, reflecting Thy magnificence !

Love never lived but was the prey of Death ;  
Life never loved that did not weep and mourn ;  
Heart never thrilled with tenderness of Love  
But it was sadly broken—ah, how soon !  
For flesh is liable to hurt and harm  
Of bitter hate, mischance, neglect, and scorn  
That crush out all its sweetness, and devote  
Love's tender blossoms of fresh-springing hope  
To spoiling blight that sears it leaf and bud.  
But O Love ! Love ! despite all bitterness,  
Despite all tearful sorrows and despairs,  
Despite Death's ruin and the ravening grave—  
Still touch my heart, O Love ! and sanctify

My life with thy dear sorrow and sweet pain—  
With thy divine, pure passion, that my soul,  
Refined and chastened by thy power, may rise  
On wingéd thoughts above the dread of Death,  
And soar as far from man as near to God !  
Then Love and Sorrow, starry sisterhood,  
And Pity, child of both, the tearful-eyed,  
Abide with me in shadow and in shine,  
To make my human sympathies as broad  
As earth, as grand as life, as deep as Death !

Alas ! among my brothers some there be  
Who shudder at the thought of being hurled  
To Madness through the gates of Grief ; therefore  
They fear to love, lest love should bring them  
pain,

And, hard as stones, their hearts are never sad ;  
As thoughtless kine that stumble in the pits,  
They fall and sleep in unremembered graves.  
I would not change the kind and suffering heart  
Of sympathy, that feels another's woe ;  
Nor freeze the melting grief that through the eyes  
Dissolves in flooding tears—I would not change

This nature for the purple of a king,  
For fame nor empire over all the earth !

I loved, but Sorrow came the guest of Love,  
And she has overshadowed all my life ;  
And in that shadow Love has fall'n asleep  
Upon a dewy couch of asphodels,  
And Death weeps over her distressed tears.  
Oh, come ye mourners ! gather round and weep ;  
Lament in sorry song ; she is no more.  
Bring pansy, violet, and rue to deck  
The altar of our grief ; sing sad the hymn  
Of Death, the dirge of Love sing sad and low ;  
Shed many tears upon the grassy mound ;  
Strew flowers that smile in June, but dew with tears  
Their scattered petals, for she is no more !  
She sleeps, the beautiful, the loved, the lost ;  
Alas and woe, she will not waken more !

Sigh ! prayerful lips, and pour ! dark eyes, your  
floods

That are, as April winds and April rains  
To Spring's green firstling sprouts, to this your seed

Of Love, that from its earth-blown flower took wing  
When Death's chill winter froze its glowing life,  
And rose, borne on the breath of God, to heaven,  
To spring, for an eternal Summer's prime  
Of bloom and beauty, in His ripened fields.  
Your lamentation is not wasted here,  
Nor useless tears are shed by them that weep ;  
A heart, though darkly, silently it throbs  
And breaks for grief, is not unknown of God,  
And not unpitied of the hosts of heaven.  
Then weep, and ever weep ! for not in vain  
Your tearful tribute on celestial soil  
Is shed ; it nourisheth this flower of love  
That groweth strong, erect and beautiful :  
Unto its leaves of young affection rare,  
Your sighs are sweeter than the western winds  
That wander coolly through earth's garden-plots  
When sunny day relieves the parchéd fields,  
And starry Evening holds the thirsting buds  
To drink with open mouths delicious streams  
Of cooling dew, poured from her generous urns.  
Your sighs, like vesper-bells, melodious rise  
Above the chiming seas, through peaceful skies

Most beautiful, with singing stars of morn  
And voiceless moon ; a wingéd air of love  
That cheers your heavenly flower embowered in bliss,  
And swoons upon its heart, made 'ware of you  
And your inspired sorrowing that sweeps  
In a sad voiceful strain from earth to heaven ;  
As when a distant peal of organ pipes,  
Singing the master-music of a soul  
That loved and sorrowed, swells upon the ear  
Of one in sleep ; straightway his soul becomes  
Enraptured of the sound, and loves and mourns  
Divinely with intense and rapturous joy  
That fills the spirit with a sense of pain  
Sublime, and elevates and glorifies :  
So your thoughts mournful penetrate the skies,  
Your voice is heard and known, and so her soul  
Is deeply moved and infinitely drowned  
In floods of sympathy with all your woe,  
Yet knows nor tears, nor ruth, nor passion's pain.  
Aye ! ye may weep, for ever pain and grief  
And torturing tears make havoc of your joys  
On this vexed earth ; but these disturb no more  
When dust to dust has crumbled, when the heart



In death rests calm and painless, when the soul  
Leaves this corruptive body tenantless,  
Unlovely in decay ; and, as a flame  
That burns its coal to ashes, rises bright  
And pure into ethereal elements,  
And is resolved into the spheréd skies,  
And doth become a portion of all sense  
And sound and sight perceptive, and all joy  
Of spiritual being changeless, one  
With God ; or of His firmaments a star,  
Or of some vast new world a minister  
Of good, or agent, or intelligence,  
Or of His heav'ns a winged inhabitant,  
Or dweller in His Paradise of Souls.  
For all our dreams are dim-remembered scenes  
Of such existence ere the change of Birth,  
Or are prophetic visions of such Life  
Inherited beyond the change of Death.

Behold ! these sleep-translations of the Soul  
Are not all idle dreams ; for lo ! we view  
Heaven's soft, undazzling landscapes blooming fair  
With dewy foliage of unfading green ;

Immortal groves with music in their leaves,  
And water-brooks where flowers that drop no buds  
Shed odorous blessings on the lucid airs ;  
Where winds sing vesper-lullabies divine ;  
Where twilight never fades, and breathes sweet rest  
And peace through darkling woods that seem to sleep  
Serenely in their shadows. Fair beyond  
Rise hills, slope dells and rivered valleys, all  
Transmitted beautiful. O happy dreams !  
O blessed hopes, bright visions of the soul  
Reflecting infinite light through infinite darkness !  
Ye stars upon the horizon of life !  
Celestial fires ! the outmost lamps of heaven,  
That blaze through night to guide to perfect day  
This Soul that rises darkly out of death,  
And fearfully aspires to light and life  
Above the empyrean, one with God !

Still let us mourn the loved and beautiful,  
The lovely and the dead ; still weep for her !  
Mourn that her eyes are dark, her heart is cold—  
The eyes that shone, the heart that burned with love—  
Weep for the eyes that cannot smile again,

And fill Death's chamber with a wailing sound  
Of woful singing, desolate and drear  
As lorn winds sobbing through November woods !  
Weep o'er the grave of all your buried hopes,  
And bring your lonely dying hearts to break  
Above the relics of your perished love,  
Low-mouldering in the hollow caves of Death.

But hush ! but hark ! let not thy purer grief  
Decline to sin and selfishness of heart !  
Arise ! In solemn majesty of thought  
Enjoy the solace of thy visioned mind  
That views, beyond the shade of Death's eclipse,  
The full-orbed splendor, Immortality !

Our love for her grew up the fairest flower  
That flourished in the gardens of our hearts ;  
But Death frost-nipped the blooming buds, and sharp  
The sapless roots twinge painful in their bed.  
Still give bereavement voice, nor loud, nor harsh,  
Commingling wrath with love's divine regret ;  
God gave, and God hath taken—all is well :  
So be our sorrow such as ushers loss

Religiously unto the change of Death,  
And for its consolation looks beyond  
The shadowy gates, above the firmament,  
Where wingéd souls pursue their upward way,  
Risen perfect from the chrysalis of Death.

Be our religious care the memory,  
Our rites, commemoration of her love !  
Resign what Death has charnelled in his crypts,  
And cherish only what was lovelier  
Than her dear lineaments entombed and dead—  
The spirit of the beauty of her soul !  
For Beauty cannot die—not that which is  
The soul divine within the Beautiful ;  
Although it pass from sight, or seem to change  
Unlovelily, 'tis neither change nor loss,  
But a transmission of its elements  
Into a purer, grander, godlier sphere  
Which is all beautiful and all divine !  
Death has no power upon the Beautiful ;  
But its frail habitation may corrupt  
When life departs that was its minister,  
And leaves the corse a loathsome, loveless heap.

This is its alteration—change of place ,  
In life and thought and light unchangeable  
As the star-systems and their central suns.  
All aspiration, all sublimest thought,  
All sense of light and of harmonious sounds,  
And awe, and exultation, and the joy  
Of contemplating ocean and the sky,  
And birth, and death, and the great mysteries  
Of life, and all creation vast or fine  
Are of this element, and dwell in it ;  
For Beauty is both intellect and light,  
God visible in all, and part of all,  
Immortal life, and love, and loveliness.

Then, Soul, arise in thy glad morn of hope !  
Arise from thy dark dreams of deadly things—  
From thy long vigils in the place of graves,  
Thy solitary hours with Sorrow spent !  
Arise, and make thy faltering music heard,  
If not by man, still in the fields and woods,  
By quiet rivers, and by silent lakes,  
'Mid rocks, ravines, and caves where echo dwells  
And hears and answers sylvan sound for sound !

Still in the leafy haunts of solitude,  
On mountain, or in valley, sing thy songs !  
Or on the ocean's wilderness of waves,  
Alone, still chant to his deep organ tones  
The melodies of thine own heart and life !  
Or in the sun, or rain, or storm, or calm,  
On land or sea beneath, or moon, or stars,  
Or driving clouds, or clear or misty night,  
Or morn or noon, let still thy voice be heard  
For Love's sake singing ever piteously,  
Or rapt in exultations !

Rise, my Soul,  
And breathe thy lofty sorrow in grand thoughts  
And exaltations of the power of Love  
O'er death and dying ! lift thy voice and sing  
Of highest hope, inspired by the flight  
Of thy dear love into the chartless depths  
Of Universe, and follow, on plumed wings  
Of contemplation, her involv'd path  
Through the abysmal, uncreated void  
Where germs and wrecks of worlds encumber Night,  
To where the outer coasts, like emerald suns

Of heav'n, blaze o'er the deeps, and splendoring  
swing

In floods of their own light, to where the hills  
Are crownéd with the citadel of God,  
Where crystal domes, inlaid with ruby stars  
And crescent suns, their dazzling firmaments  
Expand, and thence unto the oracle,  
And past the shrine, and through the wingéd doors  
Into the presence of the Deity !

But veil thy daring eyes—abide the time  
Of thy departure patiently—return,  
And touch the sadder shell ! O spirit, blow  
Thy breath along soft reeds—the bird-like pipes  
That treble low, and warble in wild-wood,  
Or by bright stream a shepherd's holiday—  
Make music sweet and simple as the brook's  
Voice rural, babbling over sand and stones,  
Or feathered songsters singing to the leaves'  
Accompaniment of rustling melody  
In tree-tops rocked by summer gusts of wind ;  
Sing to the measures of the human heart,  
Divine concord, of love, and life, and death !



For you, dear mother of my loved, I sing :  
Oh ! take the song baptized with salt tears  
That flow from my full heart through eyes grown  
dim

With weariness of weeping and sad thoughts  
Of her, thy child, and my peculiar love ;  
Who, as the first flower of an early spring  
That melts away in mists of April showers,  
Rose laughing, then did languish and depart,  
Our young delight dissolved in sudden tears,  
Whiles seen to fade as we passed on to May  
And June, to find no joy in all the bloom  
Of Summer to acquit the grief of Spring—  
Nor odorous rose through all the splendid months  
To purge remembrance of the faint perfume  
Of that first flower of Spring that haunts the year,  
A ghost of memory passionless and pale.

So take this song, this first bud of my Spring,  
So fraught with recollections of the loved  
And dead one ; take it to your inmost heart,  
And cherish its frail leaves that there may blow  
And blossom in the warm light of your love,

Though elsewhere blighted in the scornful blast  
Of cold dispraise, or withered by neglect ;  
Oh, take this child of nature to your breast !—  
If it must fade, still let it nestle there,  
And there expire, to be remembered  
With her in your fond mother thoughts alone !

FROM Death's dark spell and starless vault appalling,  
What Love can rescue, or what life reclaim  
thee ?

In vain, thou spirit beautiful, we name thee,  
Beyond our last recalling.

Alas, the orbéd light of beauty ! mortal  
As thou, its splendid effluence filled and  
brightened ;  
Alas, paled star of love, thy lone beam light-  
ened

Above Death's twilight portal !

Alas, we sleepless ! and alas, thou sleeping  
The dull and dreamless sleep, who wast our  
gladness !

Thou unresponsive or to joy, or sadness,  
And we, distressed and weeping !

Thou canst not know the anguish of our waking  
From pleasant dreams to think thee lifeless  
lying :

Alas, the streaming eyes ! the painful sighing  
That dooms our hearts to breaking !

Thou canst not feel the agony, the burning,  
The pangs, the bitterness of hopes consuming ;  
Thy cheeks are hollow-pale, erst radiant-  
blooming—

Thy bosom knows no mourning.

The grave's decay doth spread like snow-flakes o'er  
thee,

White in thy lips, and through thy soiled hair  
shaken

In drifts ; oh, thou shalt never start, and waken  
To grieve that we deplore thee !

The birds of every season sing above thee,  
Blithe neighbors to thy doorless, narrow dwell-  
ling ;

They flit about the carven tablet, telling  
The stranger how we love thee.

Their mirth disturbs not thee ; thy form reposes  
So deep and peaceful, while loud winds chant  
over,  
And from the grass spring purple tufts of  
clover,  
And pansies, and wild roses.

Beside thy grave, what gentle eye were tearless ?  
How gladly of life's burden would I shrieve  
me,  
And lay me down with thee, would Death re-  
lieve me  
Of days on-darkening cheerless.

## PART I.

WHAT shall be said of thee since thou art dead,  
Beloved? since thou hast bowed thy queenly head  
To thronéd Death? since thou hast gone, and wed  
The monarch of the grave?—what shall be said?

Dost know who kneels beside thee, coffined Clay:  
Whose kisses warm thine ashen brow so gray  
And damp and cold? whose trembling fingers stray  
Among thy ringlets—loved one, canst thou say?

What spirit locks thy speech in her mute cell,  
To hear—as ocean-echoes of a shell—  
Its charmed music, like enchantment, swell  
Upon her ravished ears, delectable?

Oh! such a voice was thine as called the flush  
Of rapture to the cheek, when songful gush  
Melodious brake—as sudden from a bush  
Trills sweet and clear the unexpected thrush.

But thy hushed lips can form no pleasant word,  
Repeat no song surpassing wild-wood bird ;  
No more thy notes, the sweetest ever heard,  
Shall stir our heavy hearts as once they stirred.

For joy that was is pain, good changed to badness,  
And sweet to bitter, and calm thought to madness,  
And all our flowery ways that rung with gladness  
Are blossomless and dumb with frost of sadness.

For Love is dead, and Life hath taken wing,  
And Death, with faded leaves self-crownéd king,  
Doth stamp the season with his signet ring ;  
And lo, all beauty darkly vanishing !

O hapless Love ! O faithless Life ! O Death  
That kissed the lips of Love with amorous breath !  
Seal, seal mine eyes with slumber, underneath  
The snow to sleep till Love awakeneth !

Ah me, the loneliness of hill and grove !  
A solitary man, I mournful rove  
By tarn, and lowland lake, and haunted cove  
Ah me, what joy in living without love ?



Swift through the wood I flutter like a shade,  
As noiseless as the shadows of the glade,  
Till, of my ghostliness grown half afraid,  
I flee back to that chamber, where, arrayed

In blanchéd shroud, my loved one sleeps. The room  
Is darkened ; but through its sepulchral gloom  
I still perceive in her wan face the bloom  
Of loveliness, too soon to grace the tomb.

And I can weep for thee, and I can wail,  
And smite my breast and hollower cheeks, more pale  
Than thine ; but can I save thee though I rail ?  
And will my passion aught with Death avail ?

Ah no ! ah no ! with thy moist breath as soon  
Expect to waken from eternal swoon  
The corse to animation, or at noon  
Command the sun to give place to the moon.

Ah no ; to loss thy stricken life inure !  
Thou mayst bewail, but thou must still endure ;  
For grieving of the dead the only cure  
Is death, whose medicine is swift and sure.

Bereavéd heart, and canst thou still contain  
This rising flood of sorrow swell'n with pain ?  
Behold, thy Love lies low, and not again  
To rise, or laugh, or weep—behold Love slain !

Behold the pallid cheek, the closéd eye ;  
The parted lips, no more to make reply  
Or question thee—break, heart ; in one wild cry  
Of lamentation ease thine agony !

What now remains of all thy blooming years  
Of love ? A withered ghostly leaf that sears  
Upon a sapless stem, and crackling veers  
In sighing winds and beating rain of tears.

Thy flowers are dead ; thou weepest all alone  
In thy late Autumn ; joy has come and gone  
With fleeting Summer ; all glad birds have flown,  
And left thee cheerlessly to sob and moan.

Weep, then, from dawn till dusk, from eve till morn !  
Weep at the bier of Love so thin, and worn,  
And pale ! weep, for the funeral fires burn  
In field and grove ! weep, as thou art forlorn !

For Love, fair Love the beautiful, is dead—  
She lieth stark—and Nature, widowéd,  
Dons sack-cloth, heaping ashes on her head  
And groveling in the dust, her winter bed.

And oh ! to sleep with her, and oh ! to be  
Folded in Love's cold arms all peacefully,  
And oh ! to weep no more, and oh ! to see  
No more of death, or pain, or misery !

My Love is dead ; her heart is cold and still ;  
I touch her cheeks—no more a rapturous thrill  
Of life inspires the blush, nor blue eyes fill  
With gleeful fires ; her face is dank and chill.

I gaze into those sightless orbs, once fair,  
But no soft-glancing light of love beams there ;  
Instead, a vacancy, a stony stare  
Expressionless, that haunts me to despair.

I turn away, o'erwhelmed with maddening grief—  
Out in the storm, and, helpless as a leaf  
Whirled in the tempest merciless and deaf,  
I plead for consolation and relief.

I seek the ocean ; but its thundrous roar  
Of billows breaking on the craggéd shore,  
Its salt spray on my lips, doth vex the more  
My desperate thoughts the dead preyed on before.

The tumult adds confusion to my woe :  
I long to leap where yon black billows flow,  
And, as I shudder darkly to and fro,  
I fear my toppling reason's overthrow.

Far seaward now in fearful gaze I strain  
Mine eyes : a ship is battling there in vain  
Through cleaving tide and clamorous hurricane,  
Then plunges down, all foundered in the main.

Alas ! the barque will never more emerge  
From that deep grave, her wingéd course to urge  
On foreign voyage or homeward.—O'er the surge  
That swallowed them I shriek the seamen's dirge :

“All buried in the sea, and deeply drowned,  
Ye sleep, ye mariners, in deathly swound :  
All wrapped in ocean-weeds, ye slumber sound,  
Dead as my hopes that perished homeward bound.

“ And oh, alas, the cruel, cruel cost  
Of loving ! Oh, my wrecked heart, tempest tost  
And sunken in despair, Death’s storm-wind crost  
Thy galleon’s path, and all I loved was lost !

“ All deeply drowned, and buried in the sea,  
Sleep well, ye mariners that ship-wrecked be !  
The dirge I sing for what was lost to me  
By heart-wreck, on Life’s ocean suddenly.”

Oh ! Death lurked in the tides when, sailing past,  
My barque of love sped merrily and fast,  
And, storming up before, he drave a blast  
That shattered carven hull and bannered mast.

And where that barque went down, no trace was left  
To mark that it had been : the Sea, bereft  
Of that fair burden, moaned through many a cleft  
Among his isles, and sobbed o’er many a drift

Of shell-strewn sandy beach, while evermore  
His waves beat ceaseless down the lonely shore ;  
For his glad days of happiness are o’er  
When Love’s barque glode his laughing winds before.

O Death, that smote my Love in mid career,  
My barque of hope that sailed without a fear !  
What wrecks hast thou engulfed this many a year  
Of tempests darkening thy long reign severe !

Behold ! in deep sea-caves the piléd swarms  
Innumerable of ships in olden storms  
Long lost, and, scattered round, the fleshless forms  
Of crews whose ribs cradle the young sea-worms.

Lo, decked with viny weeds, in watery alleys,  
The high-beaked prows of ancient pleasure-galleys,  
And, brimmed with bitter ooze, the jewelled chalice  
That flowed with love-pledged wines in southern  
valleys !

And there the limb-locked lovers still recline  
'Mid ocean flowers that blossom in the brine,  
Enclasped as when of old, with beaming eyne,  
They mingled and were one in love divine ;

What time, wan Death ! thy 'whelming whirlwind  
smote

Their lamps with darkness, and their swirling boat

Sunk down the abysm, never more to float,  
Or dance unto the piping south wind's note.

Above thy stony charnels I have kept  
Long vigils of deep musing : I have crept  
Among thy vaults, and over them that slept—  
Interred unknown, unhonored—I have wept.

Strange thoughts of these my dreamful hours have  
nourished ;  
I lived with them in fellowship and flourished  
Ages ago ; their young ambitions cherished,  
And loved, and scorned, grew old with them, and  
perished.

I seemed to hear, as well-remembered tones,  
Their laughs, and their sobs and dying groans ;  
Meanwhile, deciphering their funeral stones,  
I trod the agéd layers of mouldered bones.

O Death, how varied and how rich thy spoils !  
Thy breath the ripened grain with mildew soils ;  
Thy swift feet crush the hills, whence wines and oils  
Were plenteous, and make vain the peasant's toils.



Thy dread, invisible, and murderous foot  
Treads out thy vintage from the crushéd fruit  
Of life—the heart of man, that, like a lute,  
Sings joyous, thou delightest to make mute.

And Beauty, young and fair, with loving eyes  
Adorning Youth as stars in twilight skies  
Adorn the heav'ns, is borne a ravished prize  
To thy black altar's gloomy sacrifice.

Thy shade eclipses and thy touch annuls  
Our starry thoughts as thy invasion dulls  
The intellect ; thy deadly poison lulls  
To sleep the Powers dethronéd in our skulls—

These temples that enshrine the god-like gift  
Of Genius, strong with daring thoughts that drift  
And dazzle on the dark, till through the rift  
Of reason inspiration streams, to lift

The Soul's exalted vision, and then flashes  
The lightning, revelation, and it dashes  
The mind with wisdom's fearful fires, till crashes  
Thy dread bolt, and we shiver into ashes.

Freedom's grand commonwealths and Slavery's  
                  thrones

Avow thee equal Lord with tears and groans !  
With graves thou hast intrenchéd all the zones—  
The continents are crumbled dust of bones.

The mountain and the plain, the stream that laves  
His shores, the land, the vaster sea that paves  
His treacherous tides with blue and smiling waves,  
Are thine, and hide innumerable graves.

Men rise and fall, and generations sweep  
As surge on surge, from darkling deep to deep,  
And leave no trace to mark wherefrom they leap,  
Or whither tend, or where they sink to sleep.

We but exist between the mysteries  
Of life and death, and all that vision sees  
We understand not ; all our faculties  
Assert in vain stupendous theories.

We know we are ; but what, we cannot know,  
And why, 'twere vain to guess ; we thrive and grow  
In pride, we vaunt our power and wealth, when lo !  
Death, and the grave's eternal overthrow !

Nor worth avails, nor beauty, nor the breath  
Of pleading prayer, nor love that travailleth  
With unborn joy, nor virtue without scath  
Avails to win an hour's respite of Death ;

Else her I mourn with ever-rankling smart,  
The Virgin beautiful, with tearful art  
Of love had charmed thy poison-barbéd dart,  
And touched to kindness thy remorseless heart.

Insatiate, must thou ever flood and stain  
With innocent blood of the untimely slain  
Thy reeking altars ? must thou still maintain  
Tyrannic conquest, and all life enchain ?

And still bold youth and timid maid must shrink  
Upon thy yawning grave's disastrous brink,  
With driveling Age to dreadly plunge, must drink  
The Lethean wave, and coldly, deeply sink ?

Thou hast oppressed the earth from age to age,  
The dooméd earth, through Sin thy heritage ;  
Oh ! thou hast writ thy record's fearful page  
With blood of King and Poet, Priest and Sage !

And helplessly lie broken at thy feet  
The noblest hearts of men that ever beat  
With wisdom, truth, and song, and valor's heat,  
And woman's, framed for love, however sweet.

Our feasts are spread for thee with bread and wine :  
The hand that brims the cup, the eyes that shine  
With fervor's fire, the maidenly divine,  
The pure, the beautiful, all, all are thine.

The minstrel, as of battle-fields he sings,  
And glories of old knights and warrior kings  
And ladies fair, swoons o'er the orphaned strings,  
And never more his wild harp's music rings.

Thy fingers clutch the jester in his mirth,  
The scorner in his scorns—oh, what of worth  
And learning sparest thou? Ah, there is dearth  
Of heart in thee, Malignity of earth !

Thou stealest like a frost, and silentness  
Dwells chilling in the cheek thy hands depress ;  
And where thy wing waves dark and cumberless,  
The affrighted soul of Beauty vanishes.

Thy face we know not, nor thy form of limb—  
Thou mayst be glorious as the cherubim—  
But oh! thy handiwork is ghastly, grim,  
And loveless are the eyes thou makest dim.

From nothing beautiful canst thou withhold ;  
The meadow-daisy dieth in the cold,  
And youth, and maid, and dame, and patriarch old  
Decline to thy infections manifold.

We cannot, dread One, baffle thy delight  
In ruining the fairest with thy blight ;  
Thou stingest like a viper day and night,  
And loveliness evanishes from sight.

But this is not the end of Beauty's bloom,  
And Love expands in light beyond the gloom  
Of thy confinement, passing to relume  
The spirit dimly rising from the tomb.

Beauty and Love, whatever changes be,  
Exist twin heirs of immortality,  
And with the Soul—celestial Trinity—  
Out-soar the planets and escape from thee.

So, Death, thy triumph is alone the scars,  
The flesh untenanted, the gloom that bars  
The eyes, and wormy white decay that mars  
The cheeks : the soul must still survive the stars.

Then why these burning tears and pangs within,  
O grief-embittered spirit ? Wouldst thou win  
Release of memory from what hath been  
Thy holier joy through tempting years of sin ?

Nay ! bury her, and hush the woful clang  
Of hollow bells ; the dear remembrance hang  
In thy heart's temple of the songs she sang,  
The words she spake, the girlish laugh that rang.

And darken not thy home, O Soul, with wrath—  
Let in the sunshine lest dark passion scath  
Thy life's thin walls ! God builded thee, and hath  
All right to pluck thee or thine from His path.

He shaped this spotless maiden for love's sake ;  
He touched her petal eyelids till, awake,  
Her blue eyes pierced thy soul ; but if He make  
Superior loveliness, shall He not break ?

O Silence, kiss these lips ! O heart, inurn  
Thine ashes of regret, and mutely yearn  
For calmness—practise speech of prayer—aye, burn  
Incense—and reverent acquiescence learn !

Flow, Grief, and so thy channel deeper wears  
Within and murmurs not, draw all these tears  
To quench my burning heart ; for hope that sears,  
And pain that blooms, are mine through fruitless years.

We dwell not here together, Soul of me,  
These changing years—ephemera that see  
A summer day's delight, and end—nay ! we  
Must face harsh winters for eternity.

We plant with sweat, and labor in the croft  
For harvest while the sun and moon are soft ;  
We dream of fruits autumnal, but how oft  
To reap that vanity the Preacher scoft.

My tearful sister, haggard Misery,  
Thou hapless nun ! abide and mourn with me,  
Beseeching Heaven that thou and I may see  
Christ's Grail, and drink a draught from it, may be ;

And, in the rapture of celestial vision,  
Behold the end of our unhappy mission  
On earth, and thenceforth hold Death in derision,  
Knowing we pass the grave to life Elysian.

Nor shall we doubt again, and where we tript  
Nor stumble more ; but clasp the faith that slipt,  
Unfalteringly—for Cross, and Shrine, and Crypt  
Blazon the Cup 'tis legended He lipt.

When we are shaken with the sudden grief  
Of losing one whose life we deemed not brief,  
Jehovah ! minister to our relief,  
Who grovel in despair and unbelief.

We would invoke Thy name ; yet in the blast  
Of self-contempt stand mute, and see Love cast  
Deep in the charnel-house, and we go past  
In madness sobbing : “ God, is this the last ? ”

Nay, nay, my Soul ! this shallow brain did rave  
With sceptic thoughts that overwhelmed, and drave  
Thy Reason into bondage where, a slave,  
She dreampt that Love was vanquished at the grave.



She heard the whisperings of many a ghost  
That sagely lied; but they misled her most  
That spake the text upon her chains embossed :  
“ The dead are earth of earth and ever lost ! ”

For oh ! what heart that ever felt Love's rare,  
Divine, immortal spell, would, impious, dare,  
Above this form, with wailing of despair  
Cry out : “ My Love is dead and endeth there ! ” ?

When through thy mind—as doth a foul wind blow  
Up dismal cloud and flood—false teachings flow,  
That drench Truth's sacred lights, and overthrow  
Religion, thou art wrecked in seas of woe.

Wide, deep as chaos, are those waters rolled  
In starless, stormy tides that break in cold,  
Fierce floods, and night prevails; and quenching mould  
Encrusts the lamps all shattered in thy hold.

And cry out in thy pride : “ Peace, peace, be still ! ”  
And tell your heathen maxims o'er, until  
The tower of Reason crumble ; all your skill  
Soothes not that raging sea—and never will !

Then turn in your last stronghold, when the sleet  
Drives stinging to your blood, when round your feet  
The surges roar, and cry : “ Oh ! comfort, sweet  
Philosophy ! ” in face of your defeat.

And vaunt of intellect, that grinds beneath  
Her heels the myths of gods, that conquereth  
The universe, expounds its laws, and saith,  
“ Am *I* not God ? ” then falls the prey of Death.

Alas ! the voiceless spirit of the grave,  
Who wraps the shrouded dead in her damp cave,  
Nor sighs, nor sobs, nor answers us who wave  
Imploring arms, and knowledge of her crave.

Alas ! all lovely flesh decay hath torn.  
Alas ! the midnight, and alas ! the morn  
That gilds our follies—passion, hate, and scorn—  
Alas, my Soul ! that ever we were born.

The stars are blazing in the midnight—come,  
My Soul, and walk abroad with me ; thy numb,  
Sad spirit must be quickened ! in the sum  
Of universe what art thou ?—peace, be dumb !

Behold the cloudless night ! when thou hast traced  
It limitless, consider what a waste  
Of travailing is grief. The Power that placed  
Those firmaments the fall of her embraced.

And gaze until the young flame of the morn  
Burns golden in the East, and darkness, shorn  
Of all her stars, fades in the West, forlorn,  
And sunlight tips with fire heaven's outmost bourn.

Then cry, sweet sunshine, pity, pity me !  
And woods, and meadows, clouds, and flowers, and sea,  
Smile pleasing ! sing, birds, in the leafy tree,  
And help me to break bond with Misery !

The night is dead ; oh ! let this die, of mine,  
That wears my life out ; pour on me Thy wine  
Of gladness, and my Soul shall spread and shine,  
A reliquary rich with gems of thine.

I drink the cup of sorrow to the lees  
Of pain—I drain the dregs—oh ! give me peace,  
Great God ! as night's oppressive shadow flees,  
My Soul from Desperation's gloom release !

Sky-fallen Star, that inward glows and gleams,  
Divine infusion, dropped from heaven that seems,  
Guide thou to us our spirit loves in dreams,  
Transpierce us with their beautiful eye-beams !

Ravish our eyes with beauty, and our ears  
With lavish music ! startle these wan fears  
Of ours with lustral suns, until appears  
God's glory, breaking on us from the spheres !

Inspire us with the sound of harps ! the beat  
Of rolling timbrels tuning the swift feet  
Of marching angels, till we rise and greet  
Celestial Love in conversation sweet !

In vain ! I close the lids of weary eyes  
On throbbing, sightless balls, and from the skies  
Nor light, nor music floats ; my spirit lies  
Like withered leaves o'er which November sighs.

I walk knee-deep in snow ; the north winds steal  
Along my bones how keenly, and I feel  
A thousand pricking pains like hail-stones reel  
Against my heart, where ghostly church-bells peal.

The wintry blast roars from the sky of gray,  
The pale huge drifts are blown up ev'ry way,  
And shrill the pines, like drivelling seers who say :  
“ Thus do earth's beauties vanish day by day.”

Ice in the lands, and lands of ice at sea ;  
Cold in the clouds, but colder is in me  
Grief's season, wild as northland winters be——  
My Soul snow-bound, a-chill with agony.

All in a frozen shroud my dead love lies,  
And over her low head the loud wind cries,  
Shrieking her funeral dirge that swells and dies  
Above the barren fields in the bare skies.

No glow of cottage lights afar or near  
Invites me home ; no welcome hearth or cheer ;  
No friend to clasp my hand ; no spot so dear  
As this snow-heapéd mound forsaken here.

Beat, beat, dark winter, on the wanderer's head,  
Assail his heart till its last drop is bled ;  
Smite the dim eyes till their last tear is shed,  
And slay him where he weeps above his dead !

Only the winds endure the cold, and go,  
Like icy demons, chanting through the snow ;  
The earth and sky are mute with frost, and so  
Men's hearts are stiff with pride as mine with woe.

Be quiet, earth, one moment, and ye bleak,  
Hoarse winds sing low—for Sorrow's sake be meek—  
And I will place against her grave my cheek,  
And feel a tremor if she thrill or speak !

She lieth still, white-sheeted in a corner  
Of her low cell, where Death's slow wear hath worn her  
To thinness, and her bosom is forlorn  
Of warmth than mine, who wander here and mourn  
her.

O black and freezing night ! O bitterness  
Of spoiled life, and grief, to wild excess  
Torturing my heart ! wound me till I know less  
Than no man of Love's sorrow and distress !

O scourging willow-branches, bend and break !  
Nor groan above the dead, lest they awake  
Disturbed, and their transmuting bodies shake  
To atoms, slow as snow-fall, flake on flake.—

Or does the Lord of silence reign o'er them  
In sceptred peace? doth dreamless rest condemn  
Sensation? then the church-yard hides a gem  
To dig for ;—seek ! and who finds not, condemn.

Dishevelled willows, lash and howl and strain !  
You only rasp my grief's harmonious pain  
With discord, for they heed nor wind, nor rain,  
Secure from storms that shall not harm again.

The roots of flowers distribute sap like myrrh  
Among them, odorous, and if they stir,  
It is the heart's love-instincts that recur  
To memories of pansies. Down by her

Blow all the gladd'ning flowers of Summer ; light  
Green vines envelop her, and bluebells bright  
Conceal the darkened eyes they matched ; and right  
Against her cheek droop roses red and white.

The fire of youthful blood must linger there,  
So warmly it compels those roots to share  
A summer glow, and woos them, blooming rare,  
To clasp her form and cluster in her hair.



No ruffling din descends of joy or woe  
To startle those inhabitants, I know ;  
But there the murmurous streams that deeply flow  
Create perpetual music, sweet and low.

The sun beams not on them in all his round,  
Nor tremulous glow of moon or stars is found ;  
Still virginal beauty dwells in flowers and sound  
Where young hearts gather, even under ground.

And they dissolve in perfumes, such as cling  
Where sweet-briar twines to any crumbling thing ;  
Their bodies clad in garlands, as when Spring  
Doth screen with life Death's hideous ruining.

Conceive them not as humid flesh that breeds  
Foul worms ; but nuns in lodges where no beads  
Are told, and cloistered hermits whom Time heeds  
No more—aye, clad in isolation's weeds.

The sun, in sailing West, his course hath taken  
Through deeps of cloudless blue ; the hills, forsaken,  
Are silent as the snow, while I awaken,  
As desolate as they, but sorrow-shaken.



There breathes from all a quiet when winds keep  
From blowing, and the drifted white is deep  
In hedge and wood and gorge, on plain and steep,  
That is not mine who fret and pine and weep.

Low in the West, beyond the landscape drear,  
How glorious sunset's fiery beams appear !  
But my sad heart frames for my latest year  
A sunless, stormy twilight, more severe.—

Without, or evening star of roseate beam,  
Or crescent moon of silvery rayéd gleam ;  
And wind and drenching rain will best beseem,  
And rushing storm, and lightning's lurid stream.

But lo ! the winter flies ; the dusky pine  
Is tipped with emerald buds, and cedars shine  
In youthful green—oh Parent-Love divine,  
Beget new feelings in this breast of mine !

Breathe on my Spirit, thou life-giving Power !  
Awake Love's buried seeds as with a shower  
Of April rain, and all my heart this hour  
Shall swelling break, and blossom into flower !

I hear the bluebirds singing from the thorn,  
I see their pinions flashing through the morn ;  
O wingéd Peace and Joy that fled, forlorn,  
Last Autumn, with these birds and buds return !

O fly, thou haunting Sorrow ! On glad wing  
To clothe the naked world, creative Spring  
Revives the year, and flowers awakening  
Rejoice : so thou, my Spirit, rise and sing !

Read in the new-born grass a hope ; what we  
Miscalléd dead was slumbering quietly,  
To wake in loveliness ; by this sign she,  
More beautiful, hath risen to fairer be.

Sing ! for the sun is golden overhead,  
And violets are blue, and roses red  
As ever ; sing in praise of God who spread  
The skies, and gave thee memory of thy dead !

Sing with the babbling brook that joyous cleaves  
His bubbling way, where many a blossom weaves  
And trailing bloom of vines, and sparkling heaves  
Among his flags and dripping alder leaves.

Oh, sing with all the birds that breast the air,  
And twitter in the wood, and woo, and pair !  
Oh, sing that lilacs blow so many and fair,  
And burn Spring's incense on the balmy air !

Lie in the fields and watch the clouds float by,  
And think how deep the sea, and heaven how high ;  
What vast intent hath God in us, and why  
Hath He crowned man with Reason's dignity ?

The ocean reasons not, nor infinite air,  
And space—where planets blaze, and meteors glare  
On suns and starry systems—hath no share  
In thought : to us is given what lacketh there ;

To think. The Spirit of God within us lies,  
And is the action, thought ; by this we rise  
To knowledge, reasoning, while He supplies  
The vision and the star-lamps to our eyes.

O gentle Love ! with pillowed head so deep  
In earth where darkness is, 'tis I who creep  
Above thee in the summer grass, to weep  
For thee, Love, where they've laid thee low to sleep.

'Tis not the south wind all alone that sighs  
Above thee, nor the dew and showery skies  
That wet thy mould, where he that loved thee lies  
In prostrate sorrow, and with tearful eyes.

Thy tenderness, thy loveliness no more  
Shall gladden my sad soul ; the days are o'er  
When kisses warmed these lips, and friendship wore  
A smile that thrilled my inmost bosom's core.

No little hand to press and fondle mine,  
No soft blue eyes like quiet stars to shine  
Regretfully, or pleading ; left to pine,  
I find no love to live in place of thine.

No smile, no voice like thine, no face so fair,  
No joy with so much sympathy to share,  
No kindness, truth, no innocence so rare,  
No heart so pure and gentle anywhere.

Beneath wild grass and flowers sleep ! I wake  
And watch them drink the dewy winds that shake  
Their buds and leaves; thou bad'st them blow to make  
Me think of thee, and kiss them for thy sake.

Lie still, my Love ; the ever-varying year  
Leaves me unchanged ; forgetful flowers may sear  
And go—I still remember thou wert dear ;  
Thy tablet is my heart, thy name is here !

I view sweet blossoms fading every day,  
Their spirits rising odorous from decay ;  
I think their loveliness must pass away  
To where thou art, more beautiful than they.

And where thy spirit is, in what dim place,  
Or bright, I know not ; but my soul shall trace  
Thee out, and know the brightness of thy face,  
And call thy name, and meet thee, and embrace.

Oh, once again to feel her arms enfold  
My neck, to hear that voice so sweet of old !  
Oh, once again to kiss her cheek, or hold  
The pulseless hand in mine, though dead and cold !

To cherish what remained of her that day,  
When her eyes closed their poor lids, wan and gray ;  
Though but to watch her beauty fade away,  
Still lovely in the pallor of decay.

Oh, sweet and mournful memory of my dead !  
'Tis dear and gentle grief that bows my head ;  
Regret, through all my life, is perfume shed  
Of blooméd hopes Death crushed with stilly tread.

'Tis not a pagan sorrow, groping blind  
Through godless ways where only rain and wind  
Sob ever ; but religious grief resigned,  
That dwells in twilight skies, subdued and kind.

The Southern winds, in blowing from the sea,  
Now stir the grass, and rustle in the tree,  
So like faint footfalls, that they startle me—  
No, no, but thou art dead ; it is not thee !

Thou wakest not from out thy dreamy years,  
Thy footstep on the earth no mortal hears,  
Thy voice shall never charm our listening ears,  
Thine eyes weep none, nor ever view our tears.

The winds may sound along the sea and shore  
Their subtle music, still repeating o'er  
Wild harmonies that soften the sea's roar,—  
But thy voice wakens melody no more.

The bluebird piping high on azure wing,  
The robins' and the thrushes' carolling,  
Though joyous, touch my memory's saddest string  
That throbbed exultant when I heard thee sing.

And yet on them my pleaséd fancy dotes  
Not idly, for their song-inflated throats  
Enchant my soothéd spirit till it floats  
Enraptured, as by thine own sweetest notes.

Forests and fields are blooming, and, between,  
Rivers run bright, and wild-flowered slopes are seen,  
And earth seems beautiful in living green,—  
But not with that same splendor that hath been.

There's something that we miss, which brightened day,  
That in the flower and sparkling leaf was gay,  
That beams not now; the ripening summers stay,—  
But what adorned them most has passed away.

The love that lit the skies, and seemed to rain  
A glory on the world, from hill and plain  
Has vanished, and we sadly look in vain  
For the lost light that shall not shine again.



But where thy risen Soul is, and where mine  
Shall rise and mix eternally with thine,  
There I shall see, in firmaments divine,  
That glory, erst glad earth's, more glorious shine.

Resplendent suns and never-waning moons  
Shall rule alternate midnights and midnoons;  
The days and nights be passed like pleasing tunes,  
And years be cycles of returning Junes.

The plumage of the warbling birds shall vie  
With blade and flower and leaf and stormless sky;  
The wind shall blow not strong, but, fragrant, sigh  
Through groves and fields where never shrub shall die.

O'er all the fadeless meadows we shall rove,  
Through echoing hills, with choiring angels move,  
And reign, supreme all blissful joys above,  
In palaces of peace, star-crowned with love.

Thou hearest now the voices of the kings  
Of earth's dead singers ; spacious heavén rings  
With viols and the harps' unequalled strings,  
While seraphs pause to list on charmed wings.



Oh, hark ! I seem to hear the startling tones  
Melodious, echoed from the stellar zones !  
Oh, glory, flesh ! thy deathless tenant owns  
A voice to sing in heaven, a place on thrones,

And love is all the motive it contains—  
Its altar-fire that sparkles, and disdains  
The fuel lust that maddens, and enchains  
The soul to ruinous and endless pains.

Love is the grand religion that adorns  
Its gentle faith, that worships when it mourns,  
That praises when it weeps—not given to scorns—  
And wears its grief as Christ the crown of thorns.

O Love ! I wander by the midnight sea  
Consumed with burning thoughts of death and thee ;  
My Spirit seems to soar exultingly  
To Heaven—O Love, dead Love, commune with me !

Come, while the moon her golden shadow dips  
In the dark waves, ere night to morning slips !  
Come, Spirit, as this silent dew that drips  
Along the Southern wind, and kiss my lips !

Come in what shape or sound thou lovest best,  
What pulse of motion, or what sense of rest,  
What cloud, or nebulous light, in East or West,  
And I shall feel thy presence in my breast !

My heart shall beat recurring measures, glad  
As when of old I met thee, ere thy sad  
Departure, when thy face such beauty had  
That I, for joy of thee, went almost mad.

I'll hail what medium thy soul employs ;  
I'll know thee in a zephyr's plaintive noise,  
And dwell upon the music of thy voice,  
How faint or low, and, greeting thee, rejoice.

Let silence bring you, or the thunder's jar—  
In what evinces life or love you are ;  
A shell washed up, a perfume from afar,  
A sighing wind, or mist, or falling star.

I linger on the strand, and, thoughtfully,  
Behold the red moon, level with the sea,  
Fade down the West—and still recurs to me  
The memory of that light gone out with thee.

The moon declines beyond the gloomy wave,  
Her last beam bright as her first rising gave ;  
And so, dear Love, though young, undimmed and  
    brave,  
Thy life set in the death-gloom of the grave.

Sweet earth her blessed motherhood resumes,  
And buds leap laughing from her million wombs ;  
The slow winds are o'erladen with perfumes  
Of opening field-flowers and full apple-blooms.

The infant corn a leaved youth attains,  
The young wheat promises abundant grains,  
And rising rivers, fed with frequent rains,  
Dash from the hills and wash the sunny plains.

I cross the clover-field, and seek the shade  
Of elms beneath the hill where I have strayed  
How often, when sad thoughts of her betrayed  
My peace, and mournfully have wept and prayed.

I love the dark elm-shadows, cool as night  
And dewy at mid-noon ; I love the bright  
Green fields I see, and, far beyond, the white,  
Sharp village spire a-tremble in the light.

The blackbird whistles in the corn and wheat,  
And pleased, the blooming landscape mine eyes greet  
With welcome, while around me, moist-eyed, sweet,  
Blue violets are peeping at my feet.

I hear the village children's voices ring  
Gleefully out, mid-summer welcoming ;  
Through bush and glade, in happy pairs they sing,  
And learn their first of love black-berrying.

O maiden laughers, boyish lovers, this  
Is love's glad prime ! I know the charmed bliss  
Enrapturing your hearts, and what it is,  
Alas, to miss the love ! to lose the kiss !

But ye are children, and love only seems  
An azure day, flowers, laughter and sunbeams,  
And soft caresses—these are only gleams  
Of memory that sadden my lone dreams.

Shout, children, in the joy of youthful years !  
Sing your love-songs while still your love appears  
A blooming rose ! my laughter, changed to tears,  
My love's a thorny stem, a leaf that sears.

Ah me ! my songs have turned to weary sighs,  
For Death bore off my Love, a spoiled prize ;—  
But sing, fair children, while the Summer skies  
Delight the earth, and love illumines your eyes !

I love bird-songs, I love the wind-blown smells  
Of hidden flowers ; I love the light that dwells  
In evening skies, I love the sound that swells  
From streams, the soft refrains of village bells !

I love the warm breath of the southern breeze,  
And the dim wood's Æolian melodies,  
The chirp of crickets, and the hum of bees,  
And silence, and the crash of windy seas !

I love the storm-cloud and its thunderous roar,  
And rain-bright grass when sun breaks forth once  
more ;

I love the splash of my lithe, dripping oar,  
When cavéd echoes answer from the shore !

But that diviner spirit-love—which fed  
On beauty's aspect till, awakenéd  
To rapture, it inspired my life,—has fled  
Into the grave where beauty moulders, dead.

With Youth's glad love I cannot greet the fair  
Daughters of earth, that charm me unaware ;  
With all earth beautiful, I equal share  
My blasted heart, else haunted to despair.

And so I sing of life, and love's sweet prime,  
Of earth majestic, and of heaven sublime ;  
But as days darken in mid-summer time,  
Sad thoughts still creep o'ershadowing the rhyme.

O God, forgive an erring song that strays  
From sadness into cheerless, morbid ways !  
We know Thou lovest us, that Thou would'st raise  
Our hopes to Thee, and consecrate our days.

We own Thy means are limitless as space,—  
Thy will confines the orbits, and Thy grace  
Upholds, and yet, *there* is Thy dwelling-place  
Where one meek daisy suns her dewy face.

We view Thy terrors in the tempest's ire,  
Thy strength in the wild winds that never tire ;  
Thy beauty in or moon or star admire,  
Behold thy glory in the sunset's fire.

Thou'rt in the tears we weep, the prayers we pray,  
In all thought beautiful we think or say ;  
Thy presence can be felt both night and day,  
A conscious Power that rules our minds alway.

The lilac blooms in May, the crimson rose  
Is June's, and later still, and fairer, grows  
The heavenly lily ; so, as onward goes  
The year, her face diviner beauty shows.

The promise that was June's, a warm July  
Makes good in grass and flowers of deeper dye,  
And leafier trees, and happier birds on high,  
And longer stormless days, and bluer sky.

The season swells and ripens, and attains  
To fulness that the Harvest-God ordains ;  
The end is Autumn, rich with fruits and grains,  
Yet selfish man laments, demurs, complains.

Bewailing still, he garners nothing bright  
Through summer day to cheer the winter night,  
Nor hails the marvels working in his sight  
That prove God's ends, if he would read aright.

The mind, from ev'ry blossoming shrub it sees,  
Should formulate grand immortalities,  
And trace, through nature, love's analogies  
To life above a resurrected tree's.

Within dumb nature dwells the unerring power  
That, when she thirsts, draws down the slaking  
                  shower ;

'Tis God who drives the wheels of ev'ry hour,  
Whose finger points to heaven in ev'ry flower.

His voice is ev'ry wind ; the boisterous sea  
Leaps skyward, swelling, with His majesty  
Infused : O man, His love smiles out on thee  
From ev'ry leaf of grass, and flower, and tree !

By ev'ry singing wild-wood brook I trace  
Remembrancers of Him ; in ev'ry place  
Where green boughs wave sun-brightened, lives a  
                  grace  
Not theirs, a light reflected from His face.

He breathes in ev'ry nook where violets nod,  
Or dappled moss adorns the mountain sod ;



A wild weed, springing from a stony clod,  
Tells, as no language may, the love of God.

And in no place, O God, art thou confined,  
To no creed bound, Thou Universe of Mind ;  
In loveliness and awe Thou art enshrined,  
In earth, and sky, and wisest of mankind.

The oceans hymn Thy praise that never palter,  
The gales and rushing streams intone Thy psalter ;  
Thy temple is creation, and Thine altar  
The sun, whose soul of fire shall never falter !

Oh, baffled gaze ! to look into the air,  
Thereby to measure Space, how vain it were !  
But to conceive Thee, All, is what despair,  
Who art of everything, and everywhere !

Back ! shuddering soul of mortal : by thine art  
Imaginary, would'st thou dare impart  
Delusion ? Know'st thou God ? The human heart  
Is man's one province ; from it not depart !

Will man, whose life is one perpetual round,  
Whose outmost limit is his native ground,  
Who glories in a name's impotent sound,  
Dare fix for Thee, Omnipotence, a bound ?

Oh, make our lives more human ! teach us all  
Compassionate love ! Thou knowest, God, how small  
Our virtue is—when brethren on us call  
For aid, we pass them by and let them fall.

Oh, make all hearts Thine own, and dwell therein !  
Expel our wicked pride, and let begin  
Religious work divine, so we may win  
Our bodies from all fascinating sin !

Poor substance ours ! a summer season's leaf,  
The frailest aspen, our small life too brief  
To spend its bright hour with a blighting grief,  
Or waste a day, to friendly counsel deaf.

Then fill us with the wisdom of the sage,  
That we may know ourselves, and tame the rage  
Of sin inherent, that we may engage  
To teach the love-religion to the age.

From Thee, dear God, the promise emanates,  
That death is sweet, and dying elevates ;  
And Thine effulgence all-illuminates  
The ghostly vale beyond Death's shadowy gates.

Then farewell, maiden, spirit love of mine !  
Sleep thy long sleep in earth, while we repine  
And weep for thee, and drink Regret's sharp wine !  
Long rest and undisturbéd peace are thine.

Thine the repose of spirits passed away,  
The soul's relapse from weary toil in clay,  
A calm like evenfall to restless day,  
The peace of God that endeth not for aye.

The passing years pause silent in thine ears ;  
Only the music of harmonious spheres  
Lulls thy long sleep, while still the hopes and fears  
Of earth are ours, and laughter's drowned in tears.

But we shall see thee as our hearts portend,  
When mutual love clasps love, and friend greets  
friend,

When those dread angels earth's doomed mountains  
rend

With flaming swords, and God proclaims the end.

But from earth's ashes Love shall rise and bloom,  
And God shall crown her, and she shall assume  
The heirdom of the world, and reillumine  
Earth new created in Destruction's womb.

Thus shall it be, the Seer and Poet saith :  
When earth, renewed and fair, awakeneth,  
There shall be sorrow never, no sweet breath  
Resigned, for deathless Love shall vanquish Death !

SADLY I sing in the twilight, as shadows around me  
are falling,

Sad as the tide on the sea-shore, sadder than sea-  
wind sighing ;

Mournful and low, in the even, afar off voices are  
calling

Me from these vales of sunset to valleys where day  
is undying.

Long have I pined in this valley, distressed with its  
sighing and weeping,

Long has my soul a-wearied of waking, and living,  
and laughter ;

Sound as a dead man sleeps I would that my life  
were sleeping,

Then, in death-dreams, I could hasten beyond to  
the bright Hereafter.

Mystical voices of twilight, ye thrill me with rapture  
diviner,

Deeper than love,—than the passionate poetry writ  
in the olden

Time. Oh, sing me to sleep ! woo Death, with your  
low, lulling minor

Chorals, until my life in his opiate wings is en-  
folden !

Friends and lost lovers who died while Youth had all  
joys for the giving,

When the blown flowers seemed fadeless, abloom  
in Life's Spring and Love's Summer,

Pray to the Power that ordains, that I linger not long  
in my living,

But with this day expiring be welcomed, a long-  
looked-for comer.

Spirits that haunt the weird shadows when darkness  
around me is falling,

Voices that sob with the tides and sigh with the  
sea-wind's sighing,

I would depart with you, loved ones, beyond all re-  
turn and recalling,

Far beyond sleeping and waking, and death and  
the memory of dying.

## PART II.

SLOW sails the Night across the eastern waves,  
The Night with poppy garlands in her wings  
That ever, where she moves, their petals drop  
In slumbrous showers, veiling eyes with sleep,  
And shedding, with their fragrance, peace and rest  
And sweet repose on wearied heads and hearts ;  
Her voice—the vesper-song of lulling winds  
Responsive to the minor chords alone  
Of tender joy, and sadness without pain—  
Bids Laughter weep, and Melancholy smile.

The laborer from the vineyard and the field  
Retires, and bleating flocks are gathered home  
At twilight, and the shepherd's cares are flown.  
He goes to rest, or seeks the maid he loves,  
And, with a chaste few kisses, sings, " Good night !"  
And sleeps, to still caress her in his dreams.  
O'er field and hamlet, over hill and dale,



Night hovers, and the toils of Day are done ;  
Unbroken is the silence of the hour  
Save by the cricket, or the wakeful note  
Of restless bird, or voice of wind, or stream,  
That scarce disturbs the quiet, and seems most  
A portion of the silence and the dusk.

O Night ! dark, restful Night ! you bring to me  
Nor rest, nor slumber, neither joy nor woe,  
But peace and quiet in this thoughtful hour  
Of contemplation, when the heart is full,  
And I would be alone to think my thoughts  
Of her, the loved and lost—not tearfully,  
Nor bitterly subdued, but undisturbed  
To walk beneath the shadows, and the stars  
I love, and think of her I loved much more,  
And whose green grave they now look down upon,  
As still and bright and high above my head  
As she seems dark and low beneath my feet.

The lingering twilight fades beyond the hills,  
And deepening shadows thicken o'er the scene ;  
The features of the landscape disappear

In indistinguishable darkness ; night  
Envelops woods, fields, meadows, mountains, streams  
And by the steep sea-cliffs the crooning waves,  
Unseen, seem rocking their old shores to sleep ;  
And yonder, up the valley, gleam the lights  
Of cottage windows, faint and far away,  
Like stars upon the misty horizon ;  
Above the hills, a little crescent moon  
Climbs up the East and trims her silver flame,  
Scarce brighter than a pleiad ; cloudless skies  
Beam overhead, and not a mist obscures  
The loveliness of night.

I walk the fields,  
The dear familiar fields my childhood knew,  
But not to pluck May-blooms, nor hear the songs  
Of bird, nor swain, nor lass—as when I joined  
The merriest in the rout, and laughed, and danced,  
And sang the hours away in boyish glee,  
I cannot joy again. O careless mirth !  
I am no longer young ; these are the fields,  
And these the forests and the hills unaltered ;  
But I, alas ! am not the same blithe youth

Who ran and shouted in those early days ;  
Oh ! I am changed, and know delight no more,  
Nor that pure gladness in the winds and sun,  
The impulse and the raptures of a boy.

I visit these erst happy scenes by night ;  
I frequent my old haunts among the hills,  
And through the darkness wander like a sprite  
From lonely place to place ; the groaning wind,  
The creaking bat and hooting, homeless owl  
Are the companions of my walk ; I hear  
Their dismal music, and it seems not harsh,  
But soothing to the spirit of my mood.  
For am I not the ghost of my lost youth ?  
And has my heart not fall'n to dust with her  
Who died so many cheerless years ago ?

I meditate on death, and entertain  
The thought of dying, with the desperate joy  
Of one in love with darkness and the grave,  
And not that I behold in death and gloom  
Oblivion and repose of mortal pain,  
But that I thirst to drain this cup of life,

And entering Death's dark valley, so may pass  
Unto its outer walls, and thence beyond,  
To drink the waters of the living wells  
Of immortality and be at peace :  
As the instinctive spirit temporal  
Aspires and spurns obstruction, so the soul  
Must penetrate the spheres, and thence assume  
Angelic ministry in those high courts  
Of God, above the change of life and death.

O Night ! original and parent Night !  
Thou mother of the constellated orbs  
That sprang a shining offspring from thy womb,  
Conceived in darkness and delivered bright  
And blazing, the first children born to God  
In glory—out of gloom—what time the word  
Of light was uttered, ere the laboring deep  
Gave birth to fire and rolled the sun on high !  
O Night ! revealer of the Universe !  
Display thy wonders to my dazed sight !  
Till my hushed soul, bowed in its shrinking cell  
And trembling at its fearful destiny,  
Doth mutely worship awful God through thee !

Thou Night ! crowned with thy starry coronals  
That gem with light the convex of the dark,  
Deep shade which is the arching of thy wings,  
Brood thou upon my spirit like a dove !  
Quell pain and passion 'neath thy sheltering wings,  
And let my restless heart beat close to thine !  
Rain thy sweet dews upon my burning brow,  
And breathe on my vexed soul the soothing calm,  
Contemplative, that from thy presence showers  
Ambrosial peace ; and as I walk abroad,  
Be thou Instructor of my soul, and awe  
My lonely spirit with the solitude  
Of thine oppressive majesty, and stir  
This heart impressible, with subject joy  
In thine expansive beauty's sovereignty.  
As I commune with thee, beloved Night,  
In humble adoration, still be mine  
Pacific and companionable thoughts  
Inspired of thee ! Oh, still be mine the heart  
To look on death—the dim and confined sleep  
In starless charnels—not with pallid fear  
And glazed horror in my staring eyes,  
But welcoming seclusion and release

From most unhappy days and joyless scenes,  
Still hail the advent of the angelic shade  
With invocations, as I now greet thee.

I tread upon the graves of thousands dead ;  
My feet are on the dust of multitudes ;  
Beneath me are the vaults and mouldering caves  
Of Death, those echoless and lampless cells  
Where Desolation, throned on funeral heaps  
Of whitening bones, still keeps her ghastly court  
With Silence and Decay,—grim sisterhood !—  
Among the sepulchred and ancient dead.  
Around me gleam the pale memorials  
Of ceremonious marble,—hollow pomp !—  
By false, obsequious Adulation reared  
Above much loveless and unlovéd clay ;  
And scattered round, of perishable stuff,  
The unimaginable epitaphs  
Forget, as they that carved, the virtuous dead,  
And leave no record of their mournful tale.  
The shallow stone-wrought urn that overflows  
With rain and dew, seems shedding proper tears  
For the forgotten, unlamented maid

Whose virtues it extols, whose kith and kin  
Neglect, and weep not for, or disremember ;—  
Ah ! they dismiss lone grief, and take new friends  
Or clasp unto their alienated hearts  
A dearer one ; their eyes that wept for these,  
With brighter smiles, their lips that coldly sighed,  
With warmer kisses hail the newer love,  
Than ever greeting gave the uncherished dead :  
But here one mound, unmarked by stone or shaft,  
Is strewn with sacred flowers of memory  
That every season brings ; the grass is long,  
For tenderly the sod is sprinkled oft  
By loving hands, and frequent showers of tears  
Descend—a votive tribute of true love,  
True to the dead as to the living true.

Here rest, in one secluded neighborhood,  
Together mixed in equal dust and dust,  
What generations, races, families  
Of men successive, of what various moulds !  
What sun-aspiring Genius, eagle-eyed,  
That pierced the heavens, or prophesied, or sung,  
Or rent the veil of Nature and revealed

The secret sanctuaries of her life,  
Or with serene and philosophic thoughts  
Drew God to man, exalting man to God !

Here, in the common burial plot, repose  
The wisest and the simplest, best and worst,  
Companioned, indistinguishable all.  
The Statesman, clarion-tongued, the orator  
Whose voice, a living thunder, broke in storms  
Of eloquence that shook the Capitol,  
And roused the Senate like an ocean lashed  
To patriotic swell, or furious,  
Lies with the artisan and villager  
Who dumbly toiled and spake for no applause—  
As low as they, as powerless, as mute !

The Soldier, heir of honor, and renowned  
On those grand battle-fields Republican  
Where Liberty was born in fire and blood,  
And was baptized and saved in blood and fire,  
And purged, and immortalized—he fought  
And fell most gloriously, and died not vain.  
But here his relics rest as dark and damp,



Afar from camps and plumed and bannered hosts,  
Excitements martial, stirring trump and drum,  
As that poor rural swain, his grave-fellów,  
Who ploughed and sowed and harvested his fields,  
And saw the sun rise over the same hills  
A life-time, knowing War by rumors faint,  
Not by his red and devastating front  
And lightning eyes, destructive in a glance.

And here the ostentatious Citizen,  
The merchant-prince, of calculating eye  
For golden gain, retires, renouncing trade,  
And speculates no more ; what though his corse,  
Preserved in linens, ointments, musk and myrrh,  
Be sealed in the secure sarcophagus ?  
Soon as his neighbors in or vault, or trench,—  
Poor scholar, clown, or laborer,—shall his flesh  
Become of earth and pass into the soil.

The Poet, happier in his simple songs  
Pathetic, or the high impassioned strains  
Interpreting the deep humanities  
Of love and sorrow, or emancipated thoughts

Of man invoking, by his destined rights,  
To rise unfearful and possess the world ;  
Still, as his weeping rhyme compels the tear,  
Or that Promethean fire of his art  
Inspires the exultant souls of men oppressed  
To most sublime ambition to be free—  
Although remembered and revered withal,  
Here he relinquishes his glowing themes,  
The flame expires, his mighty heart resigns  
Its passion as his subtle mind forgets  
Its lyric tones and epic harmonies.

Engulfed in these sepulchral catacombs  
And rayless earthen chambers subterrene,  
Forgetful, unmolesting, and subdued,  
Foes meet, and enemies join hands in dust ;  
For feuds are softened in the generous clay.  
All change as one, and one transmutes as all ;  
Their substance and vitality inform  
The leavéd herbage with perennial bloom ;  
They live again in grass and vines and trees,  
And those that loved are mingled in one mould,  
And from their twin hearts springs a single flower

That blossoms, sole and lovely, in the sun  
Above them, as of old, affectionate  
In their lives wedded, bloomed the flower of love,  
Chaste, beautiful, delightful, unimpaired,  
That shed through all their years perfuméd joy.

I stand beside the grave of her I mourn ;  
My feet oppress the sod that clasps the form  
My arms embraced, and calmly, though in tears,  
I breathe these lamentations. I have passed  
The seas of stormy grief, and stranded here  
Among the dead, a friendless mariner,  
I chant these dirges at the doors of Death.  
O thou dim-veiléd sister of the Night !  
Thou solitary Death ! surrender now,  
Dark warder of thy gates, to my appeals  
And supplications ! answer what my heart  
Stern questions ! what mine eyes would dare perceive  
Within thy cavernous retreats, reveal !  
I fear not sight of thee, nor grave phantasm,  
Nor ghost, nor skeleton's thin hideousness ;  
I summon thee, O Death, be thou my guest,  
Or else receive me thine ! I would uncowl

Thy hooded features, brave thy Sphinxine gaze,  
Imbibe the wisdom of thy dangerous lore  
To very madness, and, adventurous,  
Unearth thy records, and thy covert glooms  
Explore, to learn the secrets of thy doom  
And what our fate shall be, and what the end  
Of earth, thy habitation and thy tomb.

The World was ever subject of thy sway ;  
Destruction, Fire and Famine, Plague and War,  
Thy ministers, attend in fearful state  
Thy steps disastrous, and the clash of arms,  
And groans, and cities sacked, and flaming towns,  
And crash of wall, and columns' thunderous fall  
Unite in dreadful sacrifice to thee.  
Empires laid waste, and granite capitols  
Half sunken in the deserts of their dust,  
Or buried—as those temples of the Nile  
Egyptian, Nineveh and Babylon  
By Tigris and Euphrates—celebrate  
Thy triumph over Dynasties and Powers  
And Nations numerous, whose lofty arts  
Of architecture monumental still

Perpetuate, in desolated lands  
Of sand and ruin, Thee, the vanquisher  
Of feeble monarchs, feebler gods, and men.

Tribes that have flourished on or land or wave  
Through all Creation's ages thus declined  
And perished ; all that man's presumptive pride  
Has builded to his vain mortality,  
Memorial, thou hast either overthrown  
Or marred with hoary Time's obliteration :—  
The Armies and the Navies of the world,  
Preservers and Destroyers ; Arcadie,  
The gentle, peaceful, simple shepherd's reign ;  
And Rome's colossal pageantry of arms,  
Its tribunals of iron, fire, and blood,  
Created and sustained by conquest dire ;  
And Greece, the purest of the states antique,  
Poetic, learned ; as those dusky realms  
Barbaric in the twilight of the East,—  
Where throve the schools of thoughtful mysticism  
And Asia's marvellous philosophies,—  
Evanished ! and but crumbling monuments  
Or fragmentary chronicles declare

Their virtues, or their arts of bloody War,  
Or Peace : to thee the Arcadian dropped his crook,  
The Romish Victors and the Philosophs  
Of Hellas and the mystic Orient  
Surrendered their ambitions and their lore,  
To pass away or leave a meaner race  
To crawl, obscured by their great ancestry.

To thee all Thrones and free exalted States  
Must bow ; Imperial city draped and plumed,  
And village darkened with the funeral weeds  
Of woe that mark a nation's widowhood,  
Acknowledge thee, though tribute to the dead.  
Despotic Czar, and civic President,  
And Prince, and Serf, and Freeman, one and all,  
Are part of this procession, sad and strange,  
That marches proud or humble to the grave.

Then shalt thou, Death, invest the visible world,  
And, at the last, shall this sun-poised globe  
Relax its pace, and drop into the void,  
An inorganic ruin, pathless, dark ?  
And thou, Extinguisher, shalt thou become

Extinct, this solitary wandering star  
Thy grave when thou art dead and sepulchred ?  
Ah no ! for though mankind shrink at the thought,  
And dread the horrors of the charnel-crypt,  
Thou art most gentle, O mysterious change !  
Though Superstition and the haunting fears  
Of Ignorance have clothed thee terrible—  
A demon thought in raiment of dismay—  
Thy presence is not awful. Death, thou art  
A horrid name, but thy reality  
Is rest and peace, the vision of a sleep  
Not long, and sweet—a bright transforming dream,  
In which the spirit awakens from the flesh  
And soars, serene and beautiful, to God.

But still, what though content Philosophy  
Exalt my vision, and I entertain  
Secluded hours with solemn questionings  
And thoughtful search into the deep abodes  
Of Death : what though my lamp-bearer and guide  
Be chaste Religion, and the wings of Love—  
Those pluméd vans of immortality—  
Sustain my speculations ! though I pierce

The grave and dim futurity unveil,  
From daring flight and philosophic thought  
I still return to weep at this low mound,  
Refusing solace ; here return to wail  
For thee, Beloved ; to weep and think of thee :—  
For still to mourn and shed the faithful tear  
Is human ; but, therefore, with unwet eyes  
To thus remember thee were not divine.

Oh ! many are my thoughts above thee now,  
And sadly strange ; I cannot seem to think,  
That this young grass, with golden daisies starred,  
Has thrived and withered through so many  
Spirits

And Autumns since its parent sod was closed  
Above thee, buried in my youthful years ;  
It seems but now I saw thy shrouded form  
Before me, and the scent of funeral flowers  
Seems now oppressive in that silent room ;  
I look my last, I kiss the last cold kiss,  
My burning tears fall on your smiling face  
So passive and so fair ; I turn away,  
And evermore the beauty and the peace



Of that last look have haunted my regret  
With loveliness that shall not pass away.

I cannot think wild Winter and his snows  
So many times have stormed and drifted here  
Since that long night of gust and windy flaw  
That saw the light extinguished in those eyes,  
And darkened my young life ; and yet the nights  
Have blown a thousand storms of rain and snow,  
And howling wind, about my houseless head,  
Since when I sobbed upon thy dying breast.  
It was a child that shuddered at the thud  
Of awful earth upon thy coffin-lid,  
Which is a ghostly memory to the man  
Who celebrates thy love and early death.

The feathered songsters treble in the trees,  
And bush and brake are tremulous with song ;  
But, silent as these columns, voiceless, cold,  
I sit and ponder, with down-drooping head.  
A faint and dewy odor from the grass,  
The exhalation of the budding spring,  
Charms ev'ry sense. The current of my life

Rolls back, and sparkles in the morning sun  
Of youth, and, dancing like a meadow brook,  
And singing as I dance, my life flows on  
Through slowly widening banks and deepening bed,  
Where flowers with laughing eyes peep down at me,  
Or, drooping, kiss my face, or drop sweet buds  
I fondle on my bosom as I pass ;  
And ever wider, deeper grows the stream,  
And higher climbs the bright orb of the sun,  
And thicker and more fragrant, fairer flowers  
Snow down bright petals, and extend to me  
Long, lovely arms, as they would woo me stay  
And wanton with their loveliness ; but swift  
I glance and glide through sun and softening shade,  
The sky reflecting in my tranquil depths ;  
And cedarn branches, dusk as twilight time,  
The funeral willow, and the plume-like pine  
Reflecting as I near the sombre wood.  
I hear the voice of Childhood clear in song,  
I join the jubilee, and laugh and sing,  
And leap along the low and limpid marge,  
And mingle with their childish joy, who twine  
Sweet-brier and primroses to garland Mirth.

I steal through sloping fields with buttercups  
And daisies golden, and through little chasms  
Of rock, festooned with wild-rose vines and starred  
With roses and with moss streaked gray and green ;  
I gleam down little pebbly, laughing falls,  
And nestle in the great gnarled roots of oaks  
Whose giant branches shield a thousand birds  
That swell the Summer's choral melody ;  
And ever where I trip, by sheltering nook  
Or open lawn, with simple voice I sing  
As free as native robin, finch, or thrush ;  
Though not so loud my notes, or tunable,  
Still with the same delight that swells their throats.  
But now a magic voice enchants my stream  
To turn and linger, and, in mid-career,  
I pause along a shelving bank, to list  
A music sweeter than the sweetest bird,  
And dearer than my own ; a Maiden sings,  
And, nearer as I creep, it clearer swells,  
Then silent in I flow, till at her feet  
I spread my waters, and her mirrored Form  
Floats in my deep enamored, and, her smiles  
Reflected in my face, I laugh for glee

And brighten underneath my osier shores.  
She sings the song of Childhood as she laughs  
Along the sedge,—but now she starts and shrieks  
Before a Shade who slays her with a kiss  
And bears her captive life to his cold cave.  
My troubled waters darken : now I crawl  
Through black ravines where boulders huge impede  
The dangerous way ; I swirl in deep cesspools  
Through forests wild and lonely, and I break  
O'er rocky ledges where frail lichens cling,  
And waste in clouds of spray ; through haunted gulch  
And gully, over crag and slimy stone  
I shriek like a lost spirit ; poison-springs  
That suck the roots of hemlock, dismal tarns,  
Where vipers nest, and birds of prey, I feed ;  
I surge down cavernous steeps, from ledge to ledge,  
And cliff to cliff, precipitate I pour ;  
I shuddering fall through ever-deepening gulfs  
That yawn and echo loud and noisier still,  
As still I madly plunge in agony  
Of dread suspension and the headlong roar  
From depth to depth, until, oppressed and shocked,  
I spring up, startled from my reverie,

To find myself upon the grave of her  
Who stood beside that river of my dream.

O child of Morning, love of Spring and Youth,  
What hopes of thee were mine,—abandoned now !—  
When I looked forward, with a swelling heart  
Of joy expectant, to the full flower-prime  
Of thy glad womanhood, and hoped to see  
The season of thy ripening beautiful  
And perfect for the harvest of thy days,  
For that grand consummation of thy life :—  
Thy love matured, and glorious motherhood !

I hoped to see thee change from year to year,  
From fair to fairest, and from maidenly,  
Demure and coy, to confident and brave  
And womanly ; whose sympathy were much,  
Whose tear best tribute to a noble deed,  
But whose intelligent aid, and zeal, and love,  
Were most invaluable in any cause  
Of human suffering, or sacrifice,  
Or high ambition. Oh, it were a boon  
Too dear to have beheld thee, dignified

And motherly, among thy little ones,  
The household Queen of homely, tender sway  
So worshipful—too dear for eyes of mine !

I hoped to see thee pleasing, wifely, true  
To chastity—that gem of womanhood,  
Out-lustering all the jewels of the world ;  
I did not fear to view thy roses pale,  
Nor thy blue eyes to fade ; for not with these  
Such beauty's charm diminishes or cloy,  
But rather it increases with the fame  
Of sons and daughters, and all generous deeds  
That lend to age a splendor not of youth,  
A beauty by gray hair not dispossessed—  
Pure loveliness that crowns a well-spent life.

O Woman ! it is thine, the heavenly art  
To heal the wounded spirit ; it is thine,  
When disappointment rankles in the blood,  
To draw the barbéd sting, and raise and cure  
The crushéd life with love's sustaining balm.  
When enemies assail, and Powers are moved  
To opposition of our loftiest hopes,

And envious Rage conspires with loathéd Shame  
To make lewd havoc of our chaste contents  
And joys and fairest fames ; when Friendship, false  
As Peter to his Lord, denies for fear,  
And points the scornful finger at our woe  
With the un pitying, murderous multitude,  
Oh ! then, with inextinguishable love,  
Divine as Mary's for the Crucified,  
Thou risest, changeless Woman, true as fire  
To its obscuréd sun, and with the strength  
Of sacred sympathy, the mother-kiss,  
And love's compassionate companionship,  
Thou wardest off grim Cruelty abashed,  
And nursest, on thy pure warm breast, the Soul,  
A-flutter in death's chill, to life again.  
Thou bringest to the dark hour of despair  
Celestial hopes, and lightest up the gloom  
With star-like smiles, and, though discordant thoughts  
Grate Life, thou makest music of sweet words,  
That cheers the heart and soothes the vexéd soul.  
O Woman ! laud of thee in Shakespeare's verse  
Were but small compensation ; Milton's line  
Poor-worthy ; the melodious Galaxies



Of English Song, though like the Morning Stars  
Together hymning one continuous theme  
They celebrated, it were not too much,  
In thy one praise, their spheréd harmony.

Oh ! such I fondly deemed this child would be,  
A creature of perfection, earth's best heir  
Of immortality, as God's best mould  
Of purest, finest being on the earth,  
Most fruitful and most fair and most divine—  
A perfect Woman. Oh ! there were such gleams  
Of bright intelligence in her blue eyes,  
Such starry raptures of celestial light,  
Reflected from half-risen orbs of thought,  
That at their zenith must have glowed and burned  
Full-globed of a serene poetic fire,  
Now coldly and eternally eclipsed.  
Oh, thou that would'st have joyéd in my joys  
And sorrowed in my sorrows ! thou art now  
To me, as is the memory of Youth  
To Age, a sad remembrance of delight  
And morning, at the solemn midnight hour.  
Thou liest underneath the violets



And grass and daisies, dreamless and serene,  
A sleeper in the earthen couch of Death,  
Withdrawn from all the worry of the world,  
While I must waken still, and, evermore,  
Among the dwellers of the hills and fields  
And forests, friendless cities populous,  
And rural villages hospitable,  
Find neither rest, nor joy 'mid tender men  
And loving women ; still must I return,  
With peaceless yearnings of a shattered life  
Left purposeless, and desolated heart  
Ambitionless, to watch beside this cave  
Where thou hast entered, waiting for the stroke  
That severs life and makes me one with thee.

As seasons change, and the revolving year  
Descends, through russet gleams of Autumn time,  
To sombre Winter's uncongenial gloom  
And cheerlessness, and haggard white despair ;  
But reascending, hand in hand with Spring,  
Weeps through the equinox to blush and glow  
And laugh into the Summer of the sun—  
The joy of flowers, and fruits, and leavéd prime :

So hath the human heart its periods  
Of dark despondency, its Winter time  
Of stormy, fruitless grief, when dim eyes stare  
Like frozen pools, and life's deep streams are dumb ;  
It hath calm nights and long tempestuous days,  
Its melting rains that soften and subdue,  
Its first sweet thoughts that burst like April flowers  
Up through the soil, and then the Summer flush  
And bloom, when Wisdom's sun that warms the  
soul,

Burns, quickening all the sluggish springs of life.  
And so my heart is shaken as with storms,  
And buried under whitening Winter's snows ;  
And so its waters, as the icéd floods,  
Are broken up, and dashed in torrents down  
Its deep-worn channels, as the South wind's breath,  
In March, dissolves December-frozen tides.  
So Summers, Autumns, Winters, Springs return  
With hopes and fears, and passions and despairs,  
As changeable as ev'ry season's skies,  
And various as the hearts and minds of men,  
Where, ever striving in unequal fray,  
Distrust and Faith disturb the life's repose.

But in an hour comes Death—a quiet hour—  
When all the heart is wearied, and the mind  
That ceaseless thought, is hushed in slumbrous rest ;  
The tuneful voice forgets its charmed tones  
That sweeter sang than wild-wood bird, or loud  
With eloquence, its diapasons pealed,  
That stirred the passions, or, with softer notes  
Subdued and moved to pity and to tears.  
The eyes that laughed with love or wept with woe,—  
Or, brightening, burned, as sun-approaching stars  
Into the fullest joy of life and love,—  
Wane and grow dim, and in the night expire.  
And it is well. Who yearns for length of days,  
And who cries : “ Death, thou comest all too soon,  
My years are not completed ! I would weave,  
Ambitious, at the fiery looms of Fame,  
A tapestry of dazzling thought, that so  
My name may still out-burn this spark of life,  
And shine among mankind.” What vanity  
Is fame ! Oh, what a useless wild desire !  
To pass from mouth to mouth, an idle word,  
The fashion of a day. Oh, barrenness  
Of fame, that cannot give an easeful hour

To pain, a husk that cannot yield one grain  
Of consolation to the starveling Grief,  
A mockery, a vapor's emptiness  
That but reflects the sun, then melts away  
As clouds fade in the twilight of the West !  
Such be not mine ! to waste the precious years  
In thankless labor at the weft and woof  
That, finished, is the wonder of a day.

Vain-glory is a vampire, and the bane  
Of noble living, for it drags the heart  
To infamy, and sucks its purest blood  
To glut a ravenous appetite. Alas !  
How few are temperate, humble, satisfied,  
Not mingling with the rushing multitudes,  
Ambitious each to win alone the good  
That all should equal share. To live obscure,  
And earn the daily bread by healthful toil  
At wheel, or axe, or plough is happiness  
Alone ; the simple life, in rural field  
And village spent, can still be grand and pure  
And Christ-like, for true manhood needs not fame  
To vaunt its worthiness and virtues rare,

As true nobility is of the heart,  
And not created, or unmade by fame.

But ever still the inevitable hour  
Of death draws near ; our feastings and our  
fasts,

Our joys and sorrows, and our loves and hates,—  
Alas, the hate !—will be at end full soon.

The humble and the proud, the kind and fierce,  
The foolish and the wise, within thy vaults  
Repose, O giver of tranquillity !  
Thou Guardian of the mighty dead of old !  
The greatest of the earth have followed thee,  
Mute captives, to the grave, and fearing not ;  
The Prophets of young Israel, and her Bards  
Who sang Creation's Dawn among the hills  
Judean while the shepherds watched their flocks ;  
The Grecian Homer, greater than his gods,  
Or heroes, father of the Epic line ;  
Virgil, and Dante of Italia's land ;  
The English Milton greatest of the four,  
With mighty poets—of how many lands !—  
Philosophers, Observers of the stars,

And Scientists, have died and passed away—  
Should we, then fear to follow in their steps?

No ! let it stand as best that all should die,  
Seeing how right is death ; who dare condemn,  
Not knowing, that which is, and still must be,  
Until the higher Power that made it so,  
And knows, sees fit to change what is so good,  
To better still ? I know this path of gloom  
Doth lead to glory, that we but descend  
In flesh to rise in spirit, putting off  
The body as a garment worn and old,  
To don the robes of immortality.

O thou eventful Hour, approaching Death,  
And Dissolution, come ye any day,  
Dear guests of mine ! or, if the sleepy night,  
Or twilight of the dawn, or eventide  
Doth more invite your presence, come, and rock  
This tired heart to sleep, that, weary long,  
Has tossed restlessly ! Oh, seal these eyes,  
Observant of bright stars and brighter sun,  
With everlasting darkness, nevermore

To lighten with the tear, or smile ! Oh, hush  
This feeble voice unmusical, that strove  
With its few faltering notes, distressed and wild,  
To sing of Love and Death, the lofty strain  
Of lamentation—soul-exalting theme !  
Oh, shield in the protection of thy wings  
My spirit, and enclasp these palsied hands  
And pulseless fingers that with artless touch  
Discordant, and with inexpressive power,  
Have desecrated and rebuked the lyre  
Poetic ! as, with zithern, or soft harp,  
A child might wanton inharmonious,—  
Self-pleased, though jarring the pure-tuned strings,—  
I touch the shell and hear its soul respond  
Melodious to the singing of my heart :  
And so I sang, but with unequal voice,  
This song, and, with a tremulous note, conclude  
What was attempted with forewarning fears.  
But though the unskilful verse be not adorned  
With beauty, and such thoughts as make men weep  
In raptures, it is still memorial  
Of something undelivered in my soul,  
Whose lineaments are bright and beautiful ;

Memorial of love that unto death  
Was true ; memorial of thee, Beloved,  
To whom I consecrate my cloister-life  
Of loneliness, communing with high thoughts,  
But ever loving and remembering thee,  
The beginning and the ending of my song.



## WALT WHITMAN.

O PURE-HEART singer of the human frame  
Divine, whose poesie disdains control  
Of slavish bonds ! each poem is a soul  
Incarnate born of thee and given thy name.  
Thy genius is unshackled as a flame  
That sunward soars, the central light its goal ;  
Thy thoughts are lightnings, and thy numbers  
• roll  
In nature's thunders that put art to shame.  
Exalter of the Land that gave thee birth,  
Though She insult thy grand gray years with  
wrong  
Of infamy, foul-branding thee with scars  
Of felon-hate, still shalt thou be on earth  
Revered, and, in Fame's firmament of song,  
Thy name shall blaze among the eternal stars !

## TO JOHN H. RAPP.

(On receiving the Congressional gold medal for life-saving.)

GREETING ! thou heir of an immortal fame

Above the little clamors small men heed !

What though thy merits nor attain the meed

Of civic honors, nor the loud acclaim

That hails with thundered cheers a conqueror's name—

The demi-god of battle whose grand deed

Of valor hazardous saved in its need

Disastrous this Republic from the shame

Of foul disunion—hero still wert thou,

Of bravest passion and of noblest mould,

Though palms nor crown thy deeds, nor pæans  
    laud ;

And deathless amaranth shall wreathe thy brow,

Thy heaven-delighting actions be extolled

And celebrated in the courts of God !

## TO J. B. N.

THE lowly ministry of Christ, divine,  
More glories life, and man more elevates,  
Than all the pomp of kings and worldly states,  
Or all the riches of Golconda's mine.

A good man's deeds are jewels that shall shine  
When gold and purple tarnish : Death awaits  
To strip the king, but whom God consecrates  
For good deeds, He shall robe—such end be  
thine !

With prayer and praise God is not best adored,  
Nor with celestial hymn, nor instrument,—  
The truly *human* is the godliest man !

The chosen follower of the gentle Lord,  
Is he of largest heart benevolent—  
Disciple ! Gentile ! or Samaritan !

## TO J. G. W.

OH, that companionship is most divine

Of friend and friend ; and brotherhood, more  
dear

Than love's wild fascination ! year by year

Great friendships thrive as lesser loves decline.

Through dark days of distress to soothe was thine,

When desolate, thou still remained to cheer,

And ever still be thou as dear and near,

And thy best comradeship, as ever, mine !

Amid the tumult and tempestuous strife

Of passionate multitudes, the loud commotion

Of frenzied factions that disturb this life,

Divide and clash, like an infuriate ocean,

Thy friendship breathes a calm which is to me

Like fountains of sweet water to the sea.

## JUDGMENT.

O Day, when iron Pride shall bend the knee  
And fall with fainting heart ! when Sin shall  
swoon  
With fear of her transgressions, and Hell croon  
Afar with evil joy of breaking free !  
When suns' shall freeze, and the white glaciated moon,  
A blazing ruin, plunges in the sea,  
And sunders earth, when strength of man  
shall be  
A helplessness, O dooméd Day, come soon !  
And come, Sublime Avenger ! wake the dead  
To judgment till their rising Chaos feels  
And shudders in his gloom ! Thy glory spread,  
Grinding the worlds beneath Thy chariot wheels ;  
Thy locks like thunder-clouds about Thy head,  
The Lightnings chained and chafing at Thy  
heels !

## VESPERS.

THE tapers in their golden branches shine  
Like clustered stars along the altar's rim,  
And in an atmosphere of incense, swim,  
Religious as the sky, or more divine.  
My heart is kneeling at the inmost shrine ;  
My spirit fails, my visioned eyes wax dim,  
And, though I chant the psalter and the hymn,  
My feet are on the hills of Palestine ;  
And down by Jordan river I am led  
To Galilee, and hear a mournful air,  
As if one sang for sorrow of her dead—  
'Tis Israel wailing out her heart's despair—  
Then I awake and list, with bowéd head,  
The organ sobbing through the hour of prayer.

## WHITTIER.

(THE ABOLITIONIST.)

A YOUTH whose heart rebelled 'gainst tyranny,  
A man whose soul abhorred a goad or rod ;  
The Poet armed with one great gift of God  
To scourge with fire his land's arch-enemy.  
Arrayed against unholy slavery  
He struck with those inspired men who trod  
Through deadliest peril, to redeem the sod  
From chains, and re-establish Liberty.  
Thy comrades have gone down into the dust  
And silence ; but their deeds shall live in song  
While shine the moon, and stars, and deathless  
sun.  
O Whittier, the tender and the just,  
Brave scorner of inhuman craft and wrong,  
True bard and Liberty's high priest in one !

## A RINGLET OF HAIR.

WHERE is the glossy head that long ago—  
Oh, very long ago, when happy years  
Were earth's and mine, when more of loves  
than fears  
Disturbed my heart's blood in its ebb and flow ;  
Where is the golden head I toyed with so,  
And caught this curl with its bright other  
peers  
In hand, and wet them with glad dew of tears,  
Bending to kiss her baby lips below ?  
Gone, did you say ? dead ? . . . Aye, her grave is  
low,  
Deep in a grassy vale where a white stone  
rears,  
In the place of charnels, where the moist winds  
blow  
Forever, and no one ever heeds, that hears .  
Their dirge ; where pale-faced mourners come  
and go,  
Striking their hearts and weeping bitter tears.



## NOVEMBER.

OH, misery of long autumnal hours !

The tattered trees wave sighing to and fro,

Wearily, wearily in the winds that blow

Over the stubble fields and dead wild-flowers ;

Out in the meadows pour the chilling showers ;

Down in the hollows no more daisies grow.

Drearily, drearily blow the winds, as low

They sweep the rains that weep as twilight  
lowers.

Bereaved hearts, how like Autumn ! where still cling

Tear-dripping memories of the olden days ;

Glad Summer-time of life, when joy-birds sing

Through hill and dale, with Childhood in his plays

High-hearted ; O alas, that anything

Of Love and Beauty ceases and decays !

## THE EVENING STAR, VENUS.

THOU lonely gem, bright-trembling in the West,  
When is withdrawn the sun's resplendent  
stream  
Of golden glory, fading like a dream  
Of holiness about a sage's rest !  
Far, orbéd light, whose tender sparkling beam  
Is the dim twilight's solitary guest,  
What glow of feeling thou awakenest  
In breasts where young desire doth amorous  
scheme !  
This is thine hour of triumph on the sky,  
Thou spheréd Splendor, where the day grows  
less ;  
Thou sacred fire to love, thine altar's high  
In the eternal West, where thou dost bless  
The eventide, as doth a glorious eye  
In woman make supreme her loveliness !

## LOVE'S ROSES.

OH, well thy rosy emblem, Love, is red ;

Thy wreathéd roses hide a crown of thorns,  
That sharply stings the forehead it adorns,  
And poisons the hot blood love's fire fed.

O rose, remembrancer of hearts that bled

For thy sweet meaning's sake, what nights  
and morns

And eves have I kissed thee, despite Love's  
scorns,

And prayed since *she* scorned me that I were  
dead !

It is not well that I alone must wear

Love's cruel crown, since all the roses fell  
To you, fair maid, and plaited thorns my share ;

Since you rung in my heart hope's funeral knell,  
And kissed the Judas-kiss of my despair ;  
Oh, pitiless, heartless one ! it is not well.

## THE OASIS.

THOU fair and fertile island in the sand,  
Of dewy palms and verdure-hidden springs,  
Cool groves and glades astir with flashing  
wings  
Of tropic birds, led by a blessed Hand  
To cheer the waste with music—vocal band !  
Heaven bless the palmy shade, the stream that  
sings  
Diviner than a harp's Æolian strings  
To thirsting travellers in the rainless land !  
They cherish waters, rocks, and trees, and grass,  
Who face Arabia's scorching sun, and plod  
The tentless sands that blaze on all who pass  
Intenser than the sun ; but who has trod  
The green oasis and not thought there was  
E'en in the desert evidence of God ?

## AUTUMN.

THE last frail-clinging leaves have fluttered down,  
And shudder in the keener airs that pass,  
Upon thin patches of hoar-frosted grass,  
Whereon they lie like Autumn's foot-steps  
brown.

The sunny days of Summer-time have flown ;  
The lingering lights of their last smiles, alas!  
Are fading, and the winds a requiem mass  
Peal through the woods in sober mourning  
gown.

'Tis Nature's voice soft-breathing on the ear  
Harmonious lamentation, to make sweet  
The ripened death of the full-bosomed year,  
Delivered of her fruits : lo ! where her feet  
Glanced beautiful, she lies 'mid blossoms sere,  
Dishevelled, her lorn motherhood complete !

## SONNET.

ALAS, my life ! what is in store for thee ?

Shall ever pleasant Summer seasons make

Thee laugh for love, or lighten for love's sake,

When flowers return and June-leaves crown  
each tree ?

Not evermore, lone life, shall happy be

The summer days we live ; despair will make

Thy youth decay ; but, though thy strong heart  
break,

Be proud, and suffer grand and silently !

Be faithful till the end, and who shall know

The heart is broken if the soul be brave ?

And who shall say : " He loved in vain, and so

He died a bitter death, Love's hapless slave ? "

No one shall know, so bury up thy woe

And shattered hopes deep in the heart, Love's  
grave !

## TO M. A. F.

I THOUGHT dark eyes unlovely and severe,  
I deemed them haughty, treacherous, untrue,  
And praised one pair of bonny eyes of blue,  
As only beautifully bright and clear ;  
But lo, dark-lustering, thine have made me fear  
Their splendors, and avenged their sisters too  
I scorned, for they have pierced my cold heart  
through  
With fiery wounds, most painful and most dear.  
O dark eyes, you are stormy, and I love you !  
O dark eyes, you are passionate, and burn  
With quenchless love, if but the power move  
you  
That makes proud hearts consume in love's concern !  
Be bright, eyes, while the heavens are bright  
above you !  
And flash, twin stars, as long as I discern !

## THE MARRIAGE AT CANA.

(Built on Crashaw's immortal line.)

HARK, the glad timbrel and the pealing chime  
Of pleasing harps and reeds ! how sweet and  
clear  
Blithe girlish laughter breaks between, and  
hear,  
The feet of dancers, musical, beat time !  
They rest ; a Galilean sings a rhyme,  
And each guest listens with attentive ear ;  
But who first praises, walking gravely near ?  
The teacher Christ, of radiant brow sublime.  
“No wine ?” the bride’s regretful eyes grew dim.  
“Water !” the Master cried ; all sound was  
hushed ;  
And, when the earthen jars were brought to  
Him,  
“The conscious water saw its God and blushed.”  
Oh ! never wine like that did ever brim  
Immortal cups since first the grape was  
crushed !

















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